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RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY.

From a pencil-sketch after a coloured steel-engraving frontispiece to "Researches into the Physical History of Mankind" by James Cowles Prichard, M.D., F.R.S. (Third Edition, Vol. III.) published by Sherwood, Gilbert & Piper, Paternoster Row, London, 1841.

# RAMMOHUN ROY

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THE MAN AND HIS WORK

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CENTENARY PUBLICITY BOOKLET—No. 1

*June, 1933*

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

COMPILED & EDITED BY

AMAL HOME

*Editor, "The Calcutta Municipal Gazette"*

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# FOREWORD

By THE EDITOR

WHEN I undertook, at the request of the Rammohun Centenary Committee, the task of preparing a *Publicity Booklet*, which would contain—besides everything that is contemplated to be done to commemorate the hundredth death-anniversary of the great Raja—an account of his life and activities as well as other interesting items of information regarding his multi-sided career, I had no idea of the difficulties I would have to encounter.

In the first place, mine was to be a work mainly of compilation. And any one who has any acquaintance with the literature on the subject of the Raja's life knows well how very scattered are the materials which must be gathered and pieced together for an undertaking of this kind. Hardly any of the available accounts of the Raja's career served my exact purpose, that of presenting, within a short compass, a connected and coherent story of Rammohun's life. Some are fragmentary, some controversial, some hopelessly out of date. The only account which, in a very large measure, appeared to fulfil my requirements was the sketch of the Raja's career by Pandit Sivanath Sastri in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, which had not only the saving grace of brevity but also all the merits of a story extremely well-told. But the 'Story' had been written as early as the eighties of the last century, though the book containing it was first published in 1911. It, therefore, materially suffered from those defects—mostly certain inaccuracies of facts—which only recent researches have brought to light. I have, therefore, found it necessary to supplement Pandit Sastri's 'Story' by 'Notes', which will be found immediately following it. In these 'Notes'—besides drawing freely upon the Raja's biography by Miss Sophia Dobson Collet and the account of his last days in England by Miss Mary Carpenter—I have tried to collate some of the very valuable and extremely painstaking researches of my friend, Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji of the *Modern Review*, whose work, based mainly on State Records, has not only brought out many hitherto unknown facts of Rammohun's life but has also thrown a flood of light on many an obscure corner of his

wonderful career. Unfortunately for me, as well as for all other students of the Raja's life, Mr. Banerji's contributions are all scattered over the pages of periodicals, principally of the paper with which he is connected; and I am very grateful to Mr. Banerji for placing at my disposal 'reprints' of all these articles, without which I could have done very little in supplementing the 'Story' told by Pandit Sivanath. I have also made use of some precious materials that Mr. Banerji has gathered in his two volumes of compilations from old Bengali newspapers—*Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*—dating back to Rammohun Roy's time and published very recently by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad. I only wish I had more time and space at my disposal to make fuller and better use of them. Perhaps, in a later issue of the booklet, I may yet have an opportunity of doing adequate justice to a publication of unquestionable value.

The sketch of the career of Rammohun in the *History of the Brahmo Samaj* naturally laid emphasis on the Raja's career as a Religious Reformer and partially as a Social Reformer too. His political views and activities had only been touched upon in Pandit Sastri's account. They, therefore, required to be dwelt upon at some length to be understood in their proper perspective and significance. Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee's monograph supplies this desideratum. He has shown, as he alone can show, in his paper on *Rammohun Roy and Modern India*—which he has very kindly allowed to be published in this booklet—that it was the Raja who "laid the foundation of all the principal modern movements for the elevation of our people".

But the Raja was not only a Religious, Social and Political Reformer. His was a mind and personality into the making of which had entered as much of the cultures of Islam, Brahmanism, Jaina Scriptures and Buddhist Traditions as of Judaism and Christianity and the "New Learning from the West." And whom can we approach for a synthetic estimate of Rammohun—the greatest synthetist of his age—than Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, whose illuminating interpretation, based upon lifelong and profound study of Rammohun, has furnished a key to the writings of the Raja to all earnest students. His paper—*Rammohun Roy: The Universal Man*—published in this booklet, forms a landmark in the appreciative understanding of the Raja.

I have touched upon the principal contents of this booklet and my reasons for including them therein. As regards

## FOREWORD

the other contents, they will speak for themselves. It only now remains for me to thank all those who have helped me in compiling this publication. I must first acknowledge the assistance I have received from my esteemed friend Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, the indefatigable Joint Secretary of the Centenary Committee. He has not only procured for me various publications—some of them very rare and extremely difficult to obtain—but also helped me with his valuable suggestions and advice. I have also received considerable help from my friend Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh, the well-known biographer of some of the foremost personalities of Bengal in the last century. Mr. Ghosh has very generously furnished me with an account of the friends and followers of Rammohun Roy, which I have included in the Appendices. I have had also before me the manuscript of an unpublished thesis on the “History of Political Thought from Rammohun to Dayananda” by Prof. Biman Behari Majumdar of B. N. College, Patna, which has very deservedly won him the Premchand Roychand Scholarship of the University of Calcutta. Lastly, I must thank my young friend Sriman Birendra Nath Chakravarti, who has helped me in the preparation of the manuscript of this booklet. But for his assistance I would not have been able to find time, amidst my many pressing duties, to see the publication through the press in time,—much as it has been delayed.

AMAL HOME

CENTRAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE,  
*Calcutta, June 15, 1933.*





# Rammohun Roy Centenary

[1855-1955]

## AN APPEAL

The Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy falls in the year 1933. It is an occasion which, we feel, should be celebrated in a befitting manner by all sections of people in every part of India, and by his numerous admirers throughout the world.

Not only did the Raja inaugurate the Modern Age in India, but he was one of the very few persons in his time in the world of Man who realized that the ideal of human civilization lies not in segregated individualism, but in a comprehensive co-ordination of cultures in all spheres of thought and activity, of individuals as well as of nations. Revealing to India and to the world at large the multi-sided and perfectly balanced personality of such a man is the great task before the organisers of the Centenary.

A comprehensive Scheme for the Centenary has been developed in a series of meetings held in Calcutta, commencing with a largely attended Preliminary Public Meeting at the Senate House on 18th February; and a strong Working Committee and several sub-committees have been formed to work it out. The Scheme is detailed on the next page of this Appeal.

The Membership of the General Committee, carrying important privileges mentioned on the last page, is open to all who have sympathy with the Centenary and who will pay a membership fee of Rs. 5/-.

It has been roughly estimated that item 1 of the Scheme (PUBLICATIONS, with Publicity measures, &c.), would cost Rs. 15,000; items 2 and 3 (CELEBRATIONS and PILGRIMAGE) would cost Rs. 5,000: out of item 4, the bronze STATUE would cost Rs. 20,000, the PORTRAIT and the PILLAR Rs. 7,000, and the RADHANAGORE MEMORIAL BUILDINGS Rs. 28,000. The total comes to Rs. 75,000.

Of item 6, the Rammohun Roy CHAIR and FELLOWSHIPS would require an Endowment Fund of Rupees three lakhs, and the BUILDING with a HALL in LONDON another lakh.

We appeal to people of all sections and communities to enlist themselves as Members, and also to contribute liberally towards the funds of the Centenary, so as to enable the organisers to give effect to all the proposals contained in the Scheme.

*Donations ear-marked for any specific purpose mentioned in the Scheme would be applied to such purpose alone.*

We confidently hope that the reverence in which we hold the memory of Rammohun Roy will rise, in its practical expression, to the level of the greatness of the maker of Modern India.

All contributions are to be sent either to the Honorary Treasurer at Temple Chambers, 6, Old Post Office Street, or to the Central Bank of India, Ltd., 100, Clive Street, Calcutta, A/c "Rammohun Roy Centenary".

RABINDRANATH TAGORE  
*President, General Committee.*

J. N. BASU  
*Hon. Secretary, General Committee.*

CALCUTTA,  
April 30, 1933.

HIRENDRA NATH DATTA  
*Hon. Treasurer.*

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## SCHEME OF CELEBRATION

1. PUBLICATION of (a) the Raja's Works, (b) a popular Selection from his Works, (c) Studies on his life and work, and (d) a Commemoration Volume, including tributes to his memory and brief accounts of the Centenary celebrations.

2. (i) CELEBRATIONS in Calcutta, during the Christmas holidays, comprising (a) a Convention of Religions, (b) a General Conference for papers and speeches on the Raja, (c) a Bengali Literary Conference, (d) a Women's Conference, (e) an Exhibition of various articles connected with the Raja's life and activities, etc. (ii) CELEBRATIONS in the different districts of Bengal and all the provinces of India.

3. A PILGRIMAGE to Radhanagore, the birthplace of the Raja.

4. PERMANENT MEMORIALS to the Raja's memory, viz., at CALCUTTA,—(a) a bronze Statue in some central place, (b) a Portrait in Oils for the Town Hall, and (c) re-naming the northern half of the Upper Circular Road as "Rammohun Roy Avenue"; at RADHANAGORE,—(d) a stone Pillar, and (e) completion of the Memorial Buildings.

5. OUTSIDE INDIA, Celebrations in London, Bristol, and seats of learning and centres of liberal religious movements in Europe.

6. And, on sufficient funds being raised,—(a) the FOUNDATION of a Rammohun Roy CHAIR and FELLOWSHIPS on Comparative Religion; (b) a BUILDING with a HALL in LONDON for holding meetings, accommodating Indian cultural societies, etc. It is also proposed, in the near future, (c) to construct a motor-

able ROAD to RADHANAGORE, and (d) to acquire Rammohun Roy's MANIKTALA RESIDENCE IN CALCUTTA.

[The detailed Scheme will be found in Appendix G.]

## PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

A Member will be entitled to:—

(1) Free receipt of the Publicity Pamphlet and of all other Publicity literature.

(2) Concession rates, to be fixed hereafter, for (a) the *Works* of Rammohun Roy, (b) *Studies* on Rammohun Roy, (c) *Rammohun Anthology*, and (d) the *Commemoration Volume*, as and when published.

(3) Reserved seats at all Conventions and Conferences held in connection with the Celebrations in Calcutta during the Christmas holidays.

Membership Forms may be had of:—

- (1) Centenary Office, 210/6, Cornwallis Street;
- (2) Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Office, 211, Cornwallis Street;
- (3) Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Office, 243-1, Upper Circular Road;
- (4) Rammohun Roy Library, 267, Upper Circular Road;
- (5) "The Mohammadi" Office, 91, Upper Circular Road;
- (6) Adi Brahmo Samaj, 55, Upper Chitpore Road;
- (7) Nava-vidhan Library, 89, Machuabazar Street;
- (8) Y. M. C. A., College Street Branch, 86, College Street;
- (9) Albert Institute Reading Room, 15, College Square;
- (10) The Calcutta University Institute, 7, College Square;
- (11) The Bengal Immunity Ltd. Office, 153, Dhurramtala Street;
- (12) *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette* Office, Corporation Buildings;
- (13) Mr. Sisir Kumar Dutt, 270, New Park Street;
- (14) Brahmo Sammilan Samaj Library, 1, Doctor Rajendra Road, Bhawanipur;
- (15) Y. M. C. A., Bhawanipur Branch, Paddapukur Road.

Membership Form duly filled in may be sent along with the Membership Fee of Rs. 5/- either directly to the Hony. Treasurer, Mr. Hirendranath Datta, Temple Chambers, 6, Old Post Office Street, Calcutta, or to Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, Joint Secretary, at the OFFICE of the Centenary, which has been located for the present at 210/6, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Office hours,—5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Form and Fee may also be given to any person duly authorized by the Secretaries.

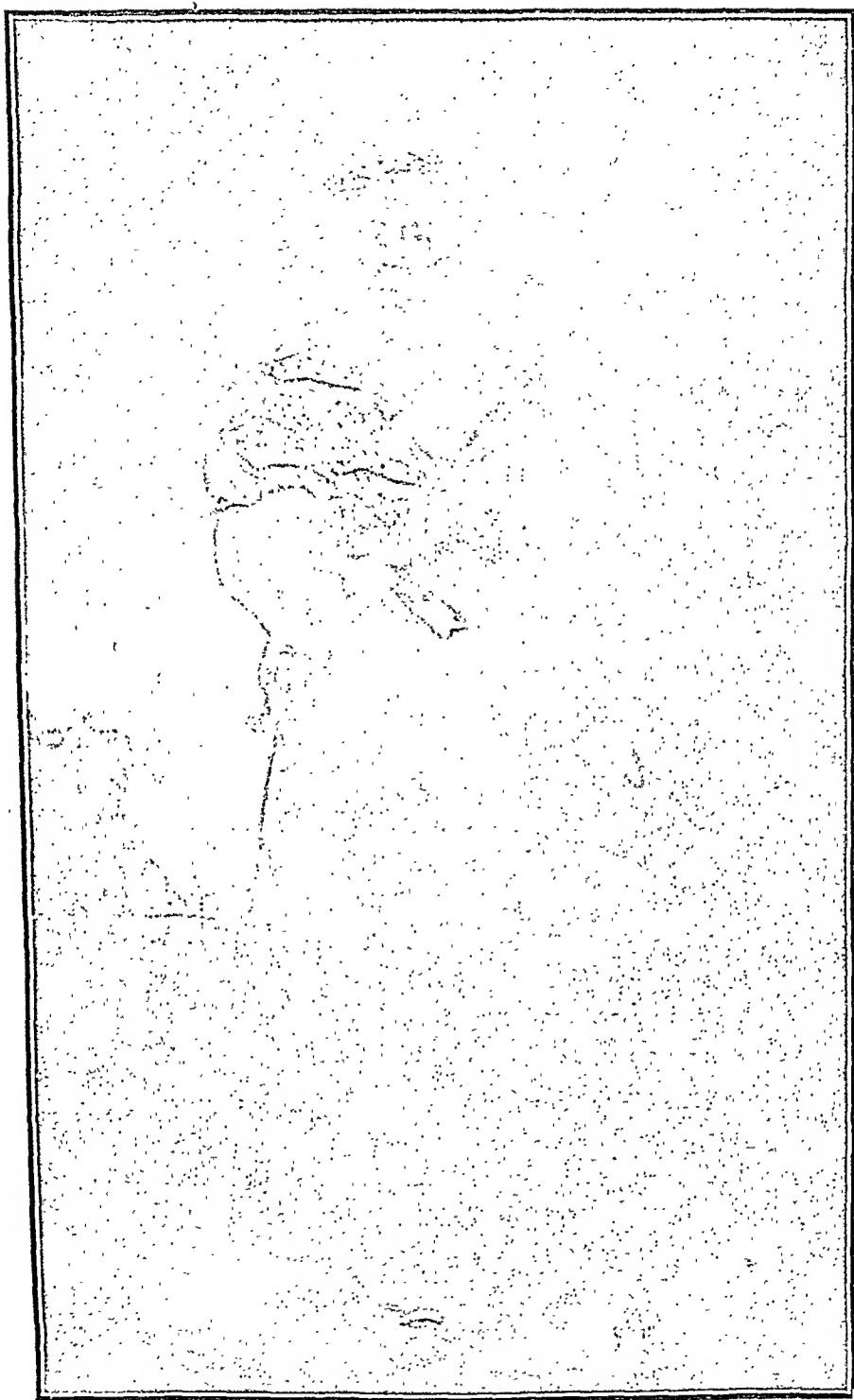


“ INAUGURATOR OF THE MODERN AGE  
IN INDIA ”

*By*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

*The address printed opposite was delivered by the Poet Rabindranath Tagore as President of the Preliminary Meeting of the Rammohun Roy Centenary, held at the Senate House, Calcutta, on the 18th February, 1933.*



RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

From a portrait by  
R. A. Briggs, R.A.  
in the Bristol Museum.

*Courtesy: "The Modern Review"*



## THE RAJA : A PEN-PORTRAIT

"The Raja, in the outer man, was cast in nature's finest mould: his figure was manly and robust: his carriage dignified: the forehead towering, expansive and commanding: the eye dark, restless, full of brightness and animation, yet liquid and benevolent, and frequently glistening with a tear when affected by the deeper sensibility of the heart: the nose of Roman form and proportions: lips full and indicative of independence: the whole features deeply expressive, with a smile of soft and peculiar fascination which won irresistably the suffrages to whom it was addressed. His manners were characterized by suavity blended with dignity, varying towards either point according to the company in which he might be placed. To ladies his politeness was marked by the most delicate manner, and his felicitous mode of paying them a compliment, gained him very many admirers among the high-born beauties of Britain. In conversation with individuals of every rank and of various nations and professions, he passed with the utmost ease from one language to another, suiting his remarks to each, and all in excellent taste, and commanding the astonishment and respect of his hearers."

MONTGOMERY MARTIN,  
*in the "Court Journal," London, 1838.*

**RAMMOHUN ROY** inaugurated the Modern Age in India. He was born at a time when our country having lost its link with the inmost truths of its being, struggled under a crushing load of unreason, in abject slavery to circumstance. In social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition, and ceased to exercise our humanity. In this dark gloom of India's degeneration Rammohun rose up, a luminous star in the firmament of India's history, with prophetic purity of vision, and unconquerable heroism of soul. He shed radiance all over the land; he rescued us from the penury of self-oblivion. Through the dynamic power of his personality, his uncompromising freedom of the spirit, he vitalized our national being with the urgency of creative endeavour, and launched it into the arduous adventure of realization. He is the great path-maker of this century who has removed ponderous obstacles that impeded our progress at every step, and initiated us into the present Era of world-wide co-operation of humanity.

Rammohun belongs to the lineage of India's great seers, who age after age have appeared in the arena of our history with the message of Eternal Man. India's special genius has been to acknowledge the divine in human affairs, to offer hospitality to all that is imperishable in human civilization, regardless of racial and national divergence. From the early dawn of our history it has been India's privilege and also its problem, as a host, to harmonise the diverse elements of humanity which have inevitably been brought to our midst, to synthesize contrasting cultures in the light



nary depth of scholarship and natural gift of intuition, to social, literary and religious affairs, never acknowledging limitations of circumstance, never deviating from his purpose lured by distractions of temporal excitement. His attempt was to establish our peoples on the full consciousness of their own cultural personality, to make them comprehend the reality of all that was unique and indelible in their civilization, and simultaneously, to make them approach other civilizations in the spirit of sympathetic co-operation. With this view in his mind he tackled an amazingly wide range of social, cultural, and religious problems of our country, and through a long life spent in unflinching service to the cause of India's cultural reassertion, brought back the pure stream of India's philosophy to the futility of our immobile and unproductive national existence. In social ethics he was an uncompromising interpreter of the truths of human relationship, tireless in his crusade against social wrongs and superstition, generous in his co-operation with any reformer, both of this country and of outside, who came to our aid in a genuine spirit of comradeship. Unflinchingly he devoted himself to the task of rescuing from the debris of India's decadence the true products of its civilization, and to make our people build on them, as the basis, the superstructure of an international culture. Deeply versed in Sanskrit, he revived classical studies, and while he imbued the Bengali literature and language with the rich atmosphere of our classical period, he opened its doors wide to the Spirit of the Age, offering access to new words from other languages, and to new ideas. To every sphere of our national existence he brought the sagacity of a comprehensive vision, the spirit of self-manifestation of the unique in the light of the universal.

Let me hope that in celebrating his Centenary we shall take upon ourselves the task of revealing to our own and contemporaneous civilizations the multisided and perfectly balanced personality of this great man. We in this country, however, owe a special responsibility, not only of bringing to light his varied contributions to the Modern Age, but of proving our right of kinship with him by justifying his life, by maintaining in every realm of our national existence the high standard of truth which he set before us. Great men have been claimed by humanity by its persecution of them and wilful neglect. We evade our responsibility for those who are immeasurably superior to us by repudiating them. Rammohun suffered martyrdom in his time, and paid the price of his greatness. But out of his sufferings, his power of transmuting them to carry on further beneficent activities for the good of humanity, the Modern Age has gained an undying urge of life. If we fail him again in this day of our nation-building, if we do not observe perfect equity of human relationship offering uncompromising fight to all forms and conventions, however ancient they may be in usage, which separate man and man, we shall be pitiful in our failure, and shamed for ever in the history of man. Our futility will be in the measure of the greatness of Rammohun Roy.

RAMMOHUN ROY: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By

PENDE SINGH GUPTA

The text of the 'Story' of Ram-mohun Roy's life printed opposite, has been abridged from the late Pandit Sivanath Sastri's *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, (Vol. I), published by R. Chatterjee from Calcutta in 1911. "Supplementary Notes" have been added by the Editor at the end of the 'Story'.

RAJA Rammohun Roy was born on the 22nd of May, 1772(1)\* at the village of Radhanagar, in the district of Burdwan(2), in the province of Bengal. His immediate ancestors, though they had deserted the hereditary profession of Brahmuns of their Birth and class, and successively held positions of trust and responsibility Parentage, under the Mahomedan government of Murshudabad, were all renowned for their great piety and orthodoxy. His father Ram Kanta Roy(3) was specially noted for his quiet and retiring disposition and his great devotion to the religion of his ancestors. The mother of Rammohun was as remarkable for her piety as her husband. The closing year of her life was passed in the performance of a characteristic vow. Though brought up in affluence and ease, she attached herself during that year to the temple of Jagannath in Orissa as a menial servant.

### EARLY LIFE.

Besides Tarini or "Phulthakurani," the mother of Rammohun, Ram Kanta Roy had another wife, by whom he had a son called Ramlochan, of whom little is known. Phulthakurani had two sons, Jugmohun and Rammohun, and a daughter. From infancy Rammohun was marked out as a specially talented lad, and his father bestowed special care on his education. According to the prevalent custom of the times, he got the boy Rammohun married very early in life(4). And the first wife dying soon, Rammohun was married to two other little girls; and all this before his education had properly commenced. He Education received the first rudiments of instruction in a *pathshala*, or at home, village school, with additional tuition in Persian under a Moulavi under due supervision of his father.

After a few years of preparatory tuition at home, the parents of Rammohun sent him to the city of Patna, at that time a famous seat of Mahomedan learning, to learn the Persian and Arabic languages, the passports to fame and position at that time. Here, whilst studying the *Koran* in the original Arabic, his eyes seem to have been for the first time opened to the errors of Hindu idolatry. He is said to have been At Patna, specially enchanted with the writings of the Sufi school of Mahomedan philosophers, whose views tallied to a large extent with those of the Vedantic school of the Hindus. Throughout his subsequent life, Rammohun Roy never entirely shook off these early Mahomedan influences. In private life, through a long course of years, his habits and tastes were those of a

\*The numerical within round brackets in the body of the text corresponds to the number of the "Supplementary Notes" immediately following this paper.—Editor.



Mahomedan, and in private conversation he always delighted to quote freely from his favourite Sufi authors(5).

Return  
from  
Patna.

At the early age of sixteen or seventeen, so the story runs, shortly after his return from Patna, he was observed day after day to be deeply engaged in writing something which his father secretly read and found to be a treatise against the superstitions and idolatry of their ancestral faith. This occasioned a hot discussion between father and son, and the latter was peremptorily ordered by the former to leave his house; whereupon the daring youth conceived the astounding plan of leaving home and undertaking a journey of several thousand miles on foot and also of crossing the Himalayas to visit Tibet for the study of Buddhism(6).

Differences  
with father.

Such travels on the part of young enthusiasts were not altogether unknown in those days. Companies of Hindu mendicants were then constantly moving about all over the country, visiting places of pilgrimage, or other important gathering places, collecting new disciples and leading them away from their homes. Many of these disciples were quite young, not older than Rammohun. It is quite likely that he fell into the company of some such travelling band, and undertook his famous journey to Tibet. During his residence in Tibet he is said to have incurred the displeasure of the Lama-worshippers by his protest against their idolatry, and had to escape with difficulty from imminent death through the help of some Tibetan ladies, an act of kindness for which he was ever grateful to the female sex.

Visit to  
Tibet.

Stay at  
Benares.

After his return from his travels, which seem to have occupied three or four years, he settled down in Benares for a number of years, devoting his time, it is supposed, to the study of the Sanskrit language and of the sacred literature of the Hindus(7).

#### SERVICE UNDER THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Father's  
Death and  
First  
Publication.

Soon after the death of his father(8), which occurred in 1803, Rammohun Roy seems to have moved down to Murshidabad, whence he published a Persian treatise with an Arabic preface, entitled *Tuhfat-ul-Murwahhidin*, or "A Gift to Monotheists," a work protesting against the idolatries and superstitions of all creeds and trying to lay a common foundation of Universal Religion in the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. We also find the mention of another work in Persian called *Manazarat-ul-Adiyan*, i.e., "Discussions on various Religions," published about this time.

It seems that at this time he secured an appointment under the East India Company(9) in the Revenue Department. After serving in several capacities at Ramgarh, Bhagalpur and other places under Mr. Digby(10), the revenue officer, he finally accompanied the officer to Rangpur in 1809 as the *Sheristadar*, or native assistant to the Collector of Revenue.

The period of his residence at Rangpur [1809—1814] was a fruitful one. On the one hand, during his residence there, he improved his own mind by acquiring varied knowledge, and, on the other, by holding discussion-meetings with representative men of various sects, such as Hindus, Mahomedans and Jainas, he tried to disseminate his principles among all classes of people. In addition to a knowledge of the old Vedantic literature of the country, he is said to have made a careful study of modern Tantric works with the aid of Hariharananda Tirthaswami, a Bengali Tantric mendicant whose acquaintance he made there, and also to have mastered the contents of the *Kalpa Sutra* and other works of the Jaina religion. Something like an informal club used to meet every evening at his residence, which attracted all classes of people and gave rise to earnest discussions on various religious topics. These discussion-meetings raised up agitation among the people of Rangpur, and a hostile party was created under the leadership of Gourikanta Bhattacharyya, a learned Brahmin, versed in Persian and Sanskrit, who also got up counter-meetings and upheld orthodox Hinduism(11).

In the midst of his arduous duties and his frequent discussion-meetings, Rammohun Roy found time to improve his knowledge of English(12) by private study commenced in his twenty-second year. It is also stated by Mr. Digby that, with the progress of his knowledge of the English language, Rammohun Roy began to take, while at Rangpur, a keen interest in European politics, specially in the course of the French Revolution. At first he became a great admirer of Napoleon, and followed his career of conquest with great enthusiasm, which, however, suffered partial decline after his abdication. But Rammohun's sympathy with the cause of freedom ever remained warm, and week by week he devoured the contents of Mr. Digby's mail papers. Thus it will be seen that though employed in some of the most engrossing secular duties during these years, Rammohun Roy never lost sight of the grand mission of his life, the religious reformation of his country, and was in fact preparing himself all the time for his great life-work.

After the death of Rammohun's father, the paternal estates came down to Jugmohun Roy, the elder brother of Rammohun Roy, who managed them till the year 1811, when he himself died, apparently leaving Rammohun Roy as the principal heir(13).

#### FOUNDATION OF THE "ATMIYA SABHA"

In the year 1814, Mr. Digby left for England on leave and the same year Rammohun Roy retired from service to commence his life-work. He settled down in Calcutta in 1814. [1815—*Ed.*] The next year saw the publication of his translation of the Vedanta and the foundation of the *Atmiya*

Settles in  
Calcutta  
and  
translates  
the  
Vedanta.

*Sabha*, an association for the dissemination of religious truth and the promotion of free discussions of theological subjects.

But who were those that constituted the *Atmiya Sabha*? By the time Rammohun Roy settled down in Calcutta his reformatory doctrines were pretty well known to the educated portion of his countrymen in the metropolis. Many reports of the meetings held at Rangpur and of his sayings and doings there must have reached them, and he was already an interesting personality to many. As fame travelled from north to south, he found many sympathisers. This sympathy with his principles, though confined to a limited circle, was nowhere so strong as in Calcutta, for here, in addition to a common Persian education, men's minds were considerably unhinged by the new contact with European civilization. Consequently, when Rammohun Roy arrived on the scene of his future labours, a coterie of sympathetic souls naturally gathered round him. Several of them belonged to some of the richest and most influential families of Bengal.

Friends  
and  
Followers.

Amongst the rich and influential men who gathered around him at that time may be mentioned Babu Dwarkanath Tagore of Jorasanko, Babu Prasanna Kumar Tagore of Pathuriaghata, Babus Kali Nath and Baikuntha Nath Munshi of Taki, Babu Brindaban Mitra, grandfather of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, Babu Kasi Nath Mullick of Calcutta, Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal of Bhukailash, Babu Annada Prosad Banerji of Telinipara, and Babu Baidya Nath Mukerji, the grandfather of Justice Anukul Mukerji. Besides these, there were many others, such as Brojo Mohun Mozumdar, Haladhar Bose, Nanda Kishore Bose, the father of Raj Narain Bose (subsequently President of the Adi Brahmo Samaj), who sought the Raja's company and frequented the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha* (15).

All of these men, however, had not the same motives in approaching Rammohun Roy. Some sought his company from a sense of the great honour done to themselves by association with one so distinguished; others frequented his house for the wise counsel and ready help that he always rendered in all their temporal embarrassments; whilst a few were actuated by a genuine sympathy with his principles. With these last he chiefly established the *Atmiya Sabha*. The majority of them were middle-aged men, men experienced in the ways of the world, whom he regarded as his friends and equals in life, and delighted to call "brothers."\* But there were also others, not very many, who were younger in age and who approached him as disciples approach their master, amongst whom were the last mentioned.

Amongst the learned associates of Rammohun Roy at this time, who materially helped him in quoting and expounding ancient scriptures, were two well-known Sanskrit scholars. The

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\*Rammohun used to address his friends in Persian as "beraders," meaning the same thing as "brothers" in English.—Editor.

first was Pandit Sivaprasad Misra, who signed some of the Raja's controversial books, and the second, Hariharananda Tirthaswami, already mentioned in connection with Rammohun's work at Rangpur. This mendicant-friend of Rammohun Roy, during his frequent travels, often visited Calcutta and spent several months at a time, in the company of Rammohun Roy. During one of these peregrinations he brought his younger brother Ram Chandra from his village-home and placed him under the care of Rammohun Roy, who subsequently appointed him to the post of the Minister of the Brahmo Samaj. He was the first Minister of the Brahmo Samaj, and afterwards became well-known as Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyavagish.

Hariharananda Tirthaswami.

But the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha* were not the only means of propagating his doctrines. For the first two years the *Atmiya Sabha* held its weekly meetings in the garden-house of Rammohun Roy at Maniktala, where Sivaprasad Misra used to recite and expound texts from the Hindu scriptures, and a well-known musician of the town, called Govinda Malla [? Golam Abbas—*Ed.*] used to sing hymns composed by Rammohun Roy and his friends. After two years the Society was removed first to Rammohun's Simla house, now situated on the Amherst Street, and subsequently to other places, finally finding shelter at the house of Behari Lal Chaudhary at Barabazar, where in 1819 there took place a celebrated debate between Rammohun Roy and Subrahmanya Sastri, a Madras Brahmin, on the subject of idol-worship, in the presence of the leading citizens of Calcutta, including Radhakanta Deb, a leader of the orthodox Hindus at that time. In this debate, by a rare display of erudition and forensic skill, Rammohun Roy is said to have vanquished his adversary. After 1819, the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha* seem to have been discontinued.

A Polemical Combat.

### THE CAMPAIGN BEGINS

After having laid his battery well in Calcutta, Rammohun Roy began to publish in quick succession his celebrated tracts\*. During the course of his researches into the domain of Sanskrit literature, Rammohun Roy was struck by the purity of the monotheistic doctrines of the *Upanishads*, and at once decided to publish some of them with his preface and translations. This he considered to be the most effective means of rousing his countrymen to a sense of the superiority of the monotheistic creed. Nor were his expectations disappointed. Their publication soon produced an intense and wide-spread agitation in Indian society, the like of which had seldom been witnessed in Bengal. Its effects extended to

Translates the *Upanishads*.

\*For a complete list of these tracts and other works of the Raja, see Appendix E. The fact that many of these publications were issued in more than one language at the same time will give some idea to readers of Rammohun's literary and propagandist activities.—*Editor*.

the southernmost Presidency of Madras, and even reached the shores of England (16). All the engines of social persecution were set in motion against him. Many of his first followers deserted him, and he was left single-handed to fight his battle. The spirit in which he bore all this persecution will be best illustrated by the following extract from the preface to his English edition of the *Abridgment of the Vedanta* :

Social  
Persecution.

“By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches, even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly.”

“The  
Precepts of  
Jesus”.

In the year 1820, Rammohun Roy startled his friends as well as his enemies by a departure from the old line of his publications. Up to that time he had chiefly confined himself to the old Hindu scriptures as his authority in appealing to his countrymen. But this year he published a novel book with a novel title,—*The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*. It was a collection of all the moral and spiritual precepts of Jesus, as recorded in the four Gospels, without the narratives of the miracles. This step, as I have said above, took his friends as well as his enemies by surprise. The prejudice against Christianity was very strong at the time. Rammohun Roy published *The Precepts of Jesus* in the face of this strong national prejudice, and what induced him to do so is best narrated by himself in the following lines :—

“This simple code of religion and morality is so admirably calculated to elevate men’s ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of caste, rank or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain and death, and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature,—and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to society, that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form.”

## CONTROVERSIES AND CONVERSION

The  
Serampore  
Controversy.

*The Precepts of Jesus* called forth hostile criticism from an unexpected quarter. The Baptist missionaries of Serampore, Messrs. Carey and Marshman, vigorously assailed it in their weekly paper, *The Friend of India*, as a tampering with what they believed to be God’s word, contemptuously stigmatizing the compiler as a “heathen.” The moral and spiritual portions of the Gospels alone, divested of the miraculous portions, were in their estimation insufficient for the purpose of human

salvation. This gave rise to a controversy which finally turned upon the doctrine of Trinity, and Rammohun Roy successively published three *Appeals to the Christian public*, the last appearing in 1823, in which, by a rare display of polemical skill, as well as of profound Biblical learning, he tried to uphold his favourite doctrine of the unity of the Godhead(17). It is evident that during the course of his researches into the Christian Scriptures he had not confined himself to the English rendering of the Bible alone, but had acquired Hebrew and Greek in order to be able to refer to the originals.

In the meantime an important event had happened which attracted considerable public notice. Mr. William Adam, a young Baptist missionary, who had come out from England a few years earlier to join the Serampore Mission, openly professed, in 1821, his conversion to Unitarian doctrines through the influence of Rammohun Roy. This great change in the life of Mr. Adam took place in the following manner.—Along with Rammohun Roy and Mr. Yates, another Christian missionary, Mr. Adam had undertaken to translate the four Gospels into Bengali. As the translation went on, many discussions incidentally arose on several points of doctrine relating to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Rammohun Roy naturally defended the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and brought his vast scholarship and logical acumen to bear upon the points of contention. As these discussions grew in point of intensity and concentration, Mr. Yates found his position in the translating committee uncomfortable, and early withdrew from it, leaving Rammohun Roy and Mr. Adam to carry on the work. The latter in his turn also found his position untenable, and ultimately gave up his faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, and made a public avowal of his conversion.

The conversion of Mr. Adam.

The conversion of Mr. Adam, who was henceforward called by his Christian critics "the second fallen Adam," naturally gave rise to great scandal among the orthodox Christian community of the country(18); and we can thus easily account for the great violence with which the Serampore missionaries attacked the Hindu reformer. From the columns of *The Friend of India* they descended into those of the *Samachar Durpan*, their Bengali organ, and indulged in very severe criticisms. Rammohun Roy, a valiant controversialist as he was, promptly replied to them. But the common courtesy of publishing his replies in the *Durpan* having been denied him, he was driven to the necessity of starting a magazine, called the *Brahmunical Magazine*, in which he vigorously assailed Trinitarian Christianity, and tried to prove that it was no better than Hindu polytheism. He further challenged Christian theologians to defend their Trinitarian and Calvinistic doctrines, and offered to print and circulate them at his own expense, of course with his rejoinders.

The Tytler  
Contro-  
versy.

This challenge drew into the field a new and unexpected combatant. There was at that time an erratic and eccentric Englishman in Calcutta, Dr. Tytler by name,\* a Professor of the Hindu College and Superintendent of the Medical School. He took up the challenge and sent in a paper defending orthodox Christianity, which Rammohun Roy refused to publish unless countersigned by a professed and accredited theologian. This incensed Dr. Tytler highly, and he rushed to the pages of the *Bengal Hurkaru* with his defence of orthodox Christianity. Under the name of Ram Doss, Rammohun assumed the 'rôle' of a sincere Hindu, and wrote satirical letters in reply to Dr. Tytler, proposing to join him in exposing the hateful reformer, who was a common enemy to their common polytheistical faith. This incensed Dr. Tytler still more, and he gave vent to furious abuse, which Rammohun Roy took very coolly.†

#### UNITARIAN PROPAGANDA

Ram-  
mohun's  
support to  
Unitarian  
Cause.

New responsibilities now devolved upon Rammohun Roy. The connection of Mr. Adam with the Baptist Mission soon ceased, and Rammohun had to help him in organising a Unitarian Mission in Calcutta soon afterwards(19). By 1823 the feelings of the Serampore missionaries were so far embittered against Rammohun Roy that they refused to print his *Final Appeal to the Christian Public* in the Baptist Mission Press, where the first two *Appeals* had been printed. Consequently he had to go through the trouble and expense of starting a new printing establishment, called the "Unitarian Press,"‡ to enable him to publish his Appeal. From this time to August 8, 1828, when the Brahma Sabha was started, Rammohun Roy delighted to call himself a Hindu Unitarian, and his followers also imitated him in this. After the cessation of his connection with the Baptist Mission, Mr. Adam was provided with a hall in the buildings then occupied by the *Bengal Hurkaru* Office, where he used to hold Unitarian service every Sunday morning, which Rammohun Roy regularly attended with some members of his family and a number of disciples. The fact of his attending a Unitarian place of worship gave rise to public criticism, and his enemies, who were on the alert, used it as a weapon against

\*Dr. R. Tytler, M.D.—Surgeon in the Hon. East India Company's Service, Author of "An enquiry into the Origin and Principles of Budaic Sabism" and of "The Substance of a Discourse in Vindication of the Divinity of our Lord"; Member of the Asiatic Society. This is how Rammohun describes his adversary in the title page of the pamphlet containing the correspondence published in 1823.—*Editor*.

†Dr. Tytler was so incensed that in one of his letters in reply to Ram Doss, he described his opponent as the "wretched tool" of the damnable heresy of Unitarianism, and subscribed himself as "your inveterate and determined foe in the Lord."—*Editor*.

‡This Press was located at Dhurrantolla Street, and at it were printed many of Rammohun's works.—*Editor*.

him. In reply to these Rammohun Roy published in 1827, in the name of Chandra Sekhar Deb, one of his disciples, a tract called "The answer of a Hindu to the question : Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended Established Churches?" in which, amongst other reasons, he advanced the following :—

"Because ... Unitarians believe, profess, and inculcate the doctrine of the divine unity, a doctrine which I find firmly maintained both by the Christian Scriptures, and by our most ancient writings commonly called the Vedas."

Attendance at Unitarian Service.

Partly by his own contributions and partly by collections amongst his friends, Rammohun Roy raised a large sum to start and maintain the William Adam Establishment Fund and was himself steadfast in his adherence to the cause(20). But somehow or other the Unitarian Mission of Mr. Adam did not prosper. It failed to evoke on the one hand the sympathy of the European residents of the town and on the other hand the co-operation of many among the educated Indians. Mr. Adam's congregation slowly melted away, leaving him almost alone in the field of labour(21).

Before finally giving up the Unitarian propaganda Rammohun Roy tried to utilize Mr. Adam in other way. A course of lectures by Mr. Adam on the principles of liberal religion was organised, which failed to attract audiences and had to be finally given up. Renewed efforts were made to resuscitate the Unitarian Mission; and Mr. Adam went on holding his Unitarian services, but it again dwindled away by the time the Brahmo Samaj was established in August 1828(22).

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

There are two accounts current about the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj. One is, that seeing the failure of his Unitarian Mission, Mr. Adam himself suggested it as a substitute; the other is that one day while Rammohun Roy was returning home in his carriage from the service of Mr. Adam, his young disciples, Tarachand Chakravarti and Chandra Sekhar Deb, who were with him, complained of the necessity of attending a Unitarian place of worship, in the absence of one entirely suited to their views and principles. Rammohun Roy took this complaint to heart, and forthwith proceeded to call a meeting of his friends, at which it was decided to open a place for the unsectarian worship of the One True God. Many of his rich friends came forward to meet the expenses, and a house was rented(23) to accommodate the first theistic congregation. Here on the 6th of Bhadra, Sakabda Era 1750, corresponding to the 20th of August, 1828, the first Samaj was opened with Tarachand Chakravarti as its Secretary. Meetings of the Samaj were held every Saturday evening and the following order of service was observed :—Two Telugu Brahmins used to recite the Vedas

First Meeting of the Brahmo Samaj.



in a sideroom, screened from the view of the congregation, where non-Brahmins would not be admitted; Utsavananda Vidyabagish would read texts of the Upanishads, which were afterwards explained in Bengali by Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyabagish; thirdly, a sermon would be preached or read by Ram Chandra Vidyabagish, followed by the singing of Govinda Malla [? Golam Abbas—*Ed.*] Some of these sermons were written by Rammohun Roy (24).

Hindu  
orthodoxy  
roused.

The opening of the new theistic service, which the common people of the time called the "Brahma Sabha," or the "One-God Society," once more roused the enmity of the orthodox Hindu community of Calcutta. Their feelings of hostility were further aggravated by the rumour that now became current, and which soon proved to be too well-founded, that Lord William Bentinck contemplated the abolition of the custom of burning Hindu widows alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands. The decree of abolition of the *Suttee* was promulgated on 4th December, 1829. As they justly attributed the anti-*Suttee* agitation to Rammohun Roy, their resentment against him knew no bounds.

"Dharma  
Sabha"  
organized.

Since the inauguration of the "Brahma Sabha" on the 20th August, 1828, its services began to attract increasing numbers, and it secured new sympathisers. Within two years Rammohun Roy was enabled to raise sufficient funds for the purchase of a house on the Chitpur Road, to be a permanent place of worship for the members of the Society. The purchase was effected before January, 1830. In the middle of that month, only six days before the public consecration of Rammohun Roy's church, Rammohun Roy's adversaries called a meeting of all the leading men of Calcutta, and organized a rival association called "Dharma Sabha," with Bhowanicharan Banerji, a learned Brahmin, as its President, and Radhakanta Deb as its Secretary (25). Thus two influential factions arose in the Hindu society of Calcutta, the one led by Rammohun Roy, followed by a number of rich families, whose position and influence were unquestioned, and the other led by Radhakanta Deb, the recognized leader of orthodox Hinduism, followed by an imposing array of big names.

The two  
rival  
parties.

The "Dharma Sabha" began to use as its organ the *Samachar Chandrika*, which daily poured abuse on the reforming party, to which the latter retorted in the *Sambad Kaumudi* with equal energy. The common people became participators in this great conflict; for the tracts of the reformers, mostly written in the simplest Bengali, appealed to them as much as to the enlightened classes. In the bathing ghats at the river-side, in market places, in public squares, in the drawing-rooms of influential citizens, everywhere the rivalry between the two associations became the subject of talk. Lines of comical poetry, caricaturing the principles of the great reformer, were composed by the wags of the time and passed from mouth to

mouth, till the streets rang with laughter and ridicule. The agitation spread from Calcutta to the interior, and everywhere the question was discussed between the two parties.

It was in the midst of these furious party contests that Rammohun Roy opened his church on the 11th of Magh, the 23rd of January 1830, and placed it in the hands of a few Trustees(26). But previous to the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj, there was another step taken by Rammohun Roy for the propagation of Hindu Theism which is worthy of notice. In the year 1825 he had established a college called the Vedanta College, for the teaching of the monotheistic doctrines of the Vedanta. Rammohun Roy founded this institution because, to use the language of one of his biographers, "he saw in the Vedanta, rightly handled and rightly explained, a means for leading his countrymen into pure and elevated theism." This Vedanta College ceased to exist by the time the Brahmo Samaj was opened(27).

Trust-deed  
of the  
Brahmo  
Samaj.

The period between 1820 and 1830 was also eventful from a literary point of view, as will be manifest from the list of his publications during that period.\* It is indeed a matter for wonder how in the midst of so much active work and such furious contests Rammohun Roy could make time to write such masterly treatises on such a variety of subjects!

But we must not close this period of his career without briefly noticing his labours in other directions. Though occupying the foremost place in his endeavours to uplift his people, religious reformation did not absorb his whole attention. His exertions in other departments of reform were no less incessant and arduous. Very few of the Indian people now know how much of their present political and social advancement they owe to the impulse communicated by Rammohun Roy. With the far-seeing eye of genius, he beheld the dawning future of India and went forward with intrepid steps to open the door for the new light. The greatness of his work will be fully revealed in ages to come.

#### SOCIAL REFORMER : THE CAUSE OF HINDU WOMEN

The women of Bengal at the time were living under the most abject form of social slavery. As many as 309 widows were burnt alive with their husbands within the jurisdiction of Calcutta in the year 1828, the year in which the Brahma Sabha was established. It was but natural that the misery and degradation of womanhood should have strongly appealed to the sympathetic heart of Rammohun Roy. His earnest pleadings on their behalf form an important feature of his writings. The women of India have found no greater defender of their rights than the founder of the Brahmo Samaj. He defended the legal rights of

Social  
slavery of  
women.

\*See Appendix E.

women, advocated their right to education and enlightenment, and, above all, devoted all the energies of his noble soul to save them from a cruel death.

The  
practice of  
"Suttee".

The custom of burning widows with their husbands first roused his horror before he was much known. While he was at Rangpur in 1811, his brother Jugmohun died, when one of his widowed wives was burnt alive with him. Rammohun held this lady in high esteem, and the news of her cruel death gave such a shock to his feelings that [tradition has it] he took a secret vow never to rest till this inhuman custom was abolished, and he was faithful to his vow throughout his life. Soon after his settlement in Calcutta along with his efforts for religious reform, he kept up a parallel agitation for the abolition of the custom of *Suttee* and did not stop till it was abolished by law.

Early  
attempts at  
regulation.

On reference to the history of the abolition of *Suttee* we find that the custom attracted the attention of the English rulers as early as January, 1789, but no practical measures came out of it till the year 1813, when Lord Moira, the then Governor-General, issued a number of Regulations partially restricting the custom. These regulations were further strengthened by important additions in 1815 and were finally issued in a collected form in 1817. From the statistics that the Government collected in 1818 it was found that within the short period of three years, between 1815 and 1818, no less than 2,365 widows had been burnt alive in different parts of the country, 1,528 of whom belonged to Calcutta and its surrounding districts alone. The publication of these Regulations seems to have created some agitation in orthodox Hindu society, and a petition was sent up to the Government praying for their repeal. This petition evoked a counter-petition from Rammohun Roy and his friends, which was submitted in August 1818, and in which we find the following description of the cruel practice of *Suttee* :

Ram-  
mohun's  
Petition.

"Your petitioners are fully aware from their own knowledge, and from the authority of credible eye-witnesses, that cases have frequently occurred where women have been induced by the persuasions of their next heirs, interested in their destruction, to burn themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands ; that others, who were induced by fear to retract a resolution rashly expressed in the first moments of grief, of burning with their deceased husbands, have been forced upon the pile and there bound down with ropes and pressed with green bamboos until consumed with the flames ; that some, after flying from the flame, have been carried back by their relations and burnt to death. All these instances, your petitioners humbly submit, are murders according to every *Shastra*, as well as to the common sense of all nations."

Defence of  
Hindu  
woman-  
hood.

The agitation called forth Rammohun Roy's tracts on *Suttee*, one of which was concluded with the following passionate appeal on behalf of the fair sex :—

"Women are in general inferior to men in bodily strength and energy ; consequently, the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable

of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them is consistent with justice. As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice, pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastras. Moreover, in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* of the *Yajur Veda* it is clearly stated that Yajnavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it.

*Secondly.* You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised; for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution.

*Thirdly.* With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be equally enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the number of the deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged, which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer much misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the *fourth* place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards; while a woman who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic....

Rammohun Roy, however, did not confine himself to mere literary controversy on the subject. He forthwith organized his friends into something like a Vigilance Committee, whose members never failed to be present whenever there was a case of *Suttee* in or near Calcutta, to see that no force was employed, and that the other requirements of the law, as laid down in the regulations, were fulfilled (28). Thus the fight was carried on in an acute and concentrated form till Lord William Bentinck appeared on the scene, and earnestly took up the question for its final decision in December 1829, as already noticed.

The service that Rammohun Roy rendered to the cause of the suppression of *Suttee* lay in strengthening the hands of the Government, by proving from ancient Hindu Scriptures that the self-immolation of a widow is nowhere enjoined as a duty.

and that a life of piety and self-abnegation was considered more virtuous, points on which the Governor-General based the preamble of the anti-*Suttee* decree.

Petitions  
and  
counter-  
petitions.

But his labours in that connection did not terminate with the passing of Lord William Bentinck's decree. His adversaries roused themselves up once more, and, on the 14th January, 1830, presented to Lord William Bentinck a petition signed by 800 inhabitants of Calcutta and backed by the opinions of 120 Pandits in which they tried to show that the position taken up by the Governor-General was an untenable one. Another petition with a similar import, signed by 340 persons from the *mofussil*, was also submitted at the same time. Rammohun Roy was on the alert. Two days after, *i.e.*, on the 16th January, a congratulatory petition signed by 300 native inhabitants of Calcutta and another signed by 800 Christians, thanking the Governor-General for his humane measure, were sent in (29). The very next day, *i.e.*, the 17th of January, the opponents of the measure held a public meeting and resolved to appeal to the authorities in England. At this meeting they also established the Dharma Sabha, already referred to, with an initial fund of Rs. 11,260 subscribed on the spot, for counter-acting the influence of Rammohun Roy's movement.

Rammohun Roy was not to be dismayed by the opposition thus set up. He soon published a tract called "The Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows considered as a religious Rite," in which he tried to meet the arguments of the 120 pandits. And one of the reasons which influenced him to undertake a voyage to England was to be able to thwart the efforts of his adversaries for the repeal of Lord William Bentinck's abolition-decree. Thus to the last, he fought for his Hindu countrywomen.

Fight to  
the last.

Views on  
Polygamy.

It is worthy of mention that Rammohun Roy published in 1832 a tract on "The Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance," in which he decried polygamy and showed the abject misery in which widows live, indirectly proving thereby that their self-immolation in many cases was an escape from greater misery. On the subject of polygamy his contention was that every man desirous of taking a second wife during the life-time of the first should be obliged by law to prove before a Court of Justice, or some other suitable legal authority, that one of the causes for polygamy, authorised by the Hindu Shastras, existed in his case (30).

#### PIONEER AND PROMOTER OF EDUCATION

Advocate  
of English  
education.

Rammohun Roy's contribution to the cause of English education was no less remarkable. He was first trained as a Persian scholar, to which he subsequently added an intimate knowledge of Sanskrit. Very few men of his time could claim a more intimate acquaintance with the ancient learning of his

people than he; yet by his genius and foresight he could see that the future regeneration of his country lay in a due cultivation of the Western sciences. Accordingly, from the very first, he became a strong advocate of English education. In 1816, in consultation with Mr. David Hare, his friend and fellow-worker, he formed the plan of opening an educational institution for the instruction of the youth of his country in the science and literature of Europe.

Sir Hyde East, the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, earnestly took up the proposal, and a meeting of the leading members of the Hindu community was convened at the house of the Chief Justice. The connection of Rammohun Roy with the scheme was not discovered in the beginning, but when it came to be generally known that he was one of the promoters of the scheme and was likely to be associated with the Committee, his Hindu adversaries held back urgently demanding the removal of his name from the list (31). Rammohun Roy, appraised by David Hare of the difficulty, at once wrote to Sir Hyde East resigning his connection with the Committee, thus removing an obstacle from the way of the immediate working out of the scheme, [which subsequently led to the foundation of the Hindu College.] He also started and maintained with his own funds, an English School in another part of the town, where Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, the second great leader of the Brahmo movement, received his first education (32).

Promoter  
of the  
Hindu  
College.

In 1823, the first Council of Education was appointed, and the lakh of rupees that had been set apart from 1813 for the encouragement of learning among the 'native races' was placed in the hands of the Council for the furtherance of education. But the English gentlemen who formed that Council were, many of them, oriental scholars, and several of them held very high posts under Government. The policy of Lord Amherst, the Governor-General of that time, took its colouring from these orientalists, and it was decided to open a college in Calcutta for the teaching of the Sanskrit language. Rammohun Roy took this decision as a move in the wrong direction, and at once addressed a letter of protest to the Governor-General, from which the following extracts are made :—

Letter to  
Lord  
Amherst.

"If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian Philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the Schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning, educated in Europe, and providing a college furnished with necessary books, implements and other apparatus."

Emphasis  
on  
Scientific  
Education.

When we reflect that these lines were penned by a native of Bengal at a time when the current ideas of education were low and old-fashioned, our wonder knows no bounds, and we feel them to be characteristic of the great man whom Providence had designed to be the maker of New India(33A).

Rammohun Roy's help towards the promotion of the cause of English education was ever ready. Shortly before his departure for England in 1830, when the Rev. Alexander Duff, the Scotch Missionary, arrived [in Calcutta] and wanted to open an English School, Rammohun secured the first house for him and also the first batch of half-a-dozen students(33B).

His exertions for the introduction of English education were not, however, crowned with success till two years after his death, when, in March 1835, Lord William Bentinck, backed by Lord Macaulay, issued his famous Education Decree, which formally inaugurated the policy of English education, which has borne such signal fruits.

#### AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST

His exertions in another direction were equally vigorous. He found that there was no literature of the people. All that existed of that kind were a few poetical works of the preceding two or three centuries. There were no prose works, at least not any popularly known, and people knew not how to read or write prose. The Serampore Missionaries and the Fort William College Pandits had been trying for some years past to remove that want, but the glory of having firmly laid the foundations of modern Bengali prose literature belongs to Rammohun Roy. For the first time in the history of the country, Rammohun Roy departed from the old method of carrying on learned discussions in a learned language, and he wrote his tracts in the common language of the people. Thus an impetus was given to national literature, which has produced in later times such marvellous results. He wrote a grammar and a geography\* in the Bengali language, at the instance of the School Book Society, for the education of the common people.

Rammohun Roy always made it a point to communicate useful knowledge to his countrymen through the columns of his Bengali newspaper, the *Sambad Kaumudi*(34), started in 1821, and his Persian journal, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* (35), started in 1822. The examples of the *Kaumudi* and the *Mirat* were soon followed by his adversaries in starting the *Samachar Chandrika*(36) and the *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa*(37), to carry on the agitation against the abolition of *Suttee* and other controversies with the reforming party. But the good days for native journalism inaugurated by Lord Hastings, the Governor-General,

\*Though reference is made to this Geography by Rajnarain Bose in his edition of the Bengali works of Raja Rammohun Roy, it is, we are told by the same authority, nowhere available.—Editor.

Impetus to  
Bengali  
Literature.

Activities  
as a  
Journalist.

by relaxing the severe press restrictions of former times, were soon clouded by the temporary accession to the post of Governor-General in 1823 of Mr. John Adam, a member of the Civil Service. Under the influence of his bureaucratic advisers, Mr. Adam took stringent measures for the suppression of the liberty of the press(38). For the fault of criticising an administrative measure of the Government, Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, was deported from India at two months' notice(39); and Mr. Sandford Arnot, his assistant, was arrested in his office for a similar offence and was put on board an England-going vessel. And to put a finish to such arbitrary proceedings, a Press Ordinance was passed by the Governor-General's Council, which imposed the severest restriction upon the entire Press, both Anglo-Indian and Indian, and made it obligatory on the part of intending proprietors and publishers of newspapers or other periodicals to obtain a license from the Governor-General.

This Ordinance was passed without notice on the 14th of March, 1823, and was pushed through the Supreme Court, according to the law then existing, after only twenty days' publication in that Court. Rammohun Roy tried to rouse his countrymen to a sense of the seriousness of the Government measures, got up a memorial for the repeal of the Ordinance, engaged the services of two lawyers and fought an earnest battle in the Supreme Court before that Ordinance could receive the sanction of that Court, and thereby assume the authority of a duly enacted law. He was defeated in his object, but did not stop there, and got up a public petition to the King of England, in which he tried to prove, by a rare display of sound judgment and logical reasoning, that, in a country situated like India, the liberty of the Press was an essential condition for good government. Unfortunately his appeal to the King of England also was fruitless, though it must be admitted that the steps he took on this occasion and the discussions he started paved the way for the liberal measure of Sir Charles Metcalfe which liberated the Indian Press in 1835.†

Fight  
for a  
Free Press.

But it was not only political or polemical discussions for which Rammohun Roy used his papers. He looked upon them as means of popular education, and through them he always tried to convey useful knowledge to his countrymen; and it was for this reason that he fought so hard to save his papers from the threatened extinction. The *Mirat* had to be given up after a short career in consequence of the new Ordinance, but the *Kaumudi* was kept up till some years after the death of its founder.

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†For an excellent account of Rammohun's services to the cause of the Freedom of the Press in India, as also his activities as a journalist, readers are referred to three illuminating articles on "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Modern Review* for the months of April, May and August, 1931.—Editor.



Love of  
Liberty.

It should also be mentioned in passing that there were other spheres of his activity. He wrote tracts for the vindication of the legal rights of the people, and got up an agitation for the protection of their political interests. So great was his love of liberty that he followed with intense interest the course of the French Revolution, and is said to have given a public dinner in the Town Hall of Calcutta as a mark of his joy at the establishment of constitutional government in Spain.\*

## VISIT TO EUROPE

Objects of  
his visit.

Rammohun Roy closed his remarkable career of almost superhuman activity with a visit to Europe, which also was pregnant with important results. After the opening of the Brahmo Samaj, he proceeded to make provision for the management of its affairs, published his second English tract on *Suttee*, and began to make preparations for his voyage to Europe. The immediate object of his visit to that country was to plead before the authorities of the East India Company the case of the ex-Emperor of Delhi, with which he was entrusted as his ambassador(40). But his real object was two-fold : first, to baffle the efforts of his adversaries to get Bentinck's *Suttee*-enactment repealed; and, secondly, to be present in England during the the East India Company's Charter(41).

The project of visiting Europe was an old one in the mind of Rammohun Roy, at least as old as his settlement in Calcutta in 1815; for we find it mentioned in a letter of Rev. Mr. Yates of the Baptist Mission in Calcutta, written in 1815, that Rammohun Roy had expressed to him in that year his intention of visiting England to study at one of the Universities. He carried out his project of a European visit after so many years. He started for Europe on the 15th November, 1830, and arrived at Liverpool on the 8th of April, 1831, voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, as was the custom with sailing vessels in those days.

Reception  
and  
activities  
in England

After his arrival in England(42) he met, amongst others, William Roscoe(43), the historian of the Medicis, and Jeremy Bentham, the Utilitarian philosopher(44). During his stay in London he was publicly received at the Annual Meeting of the Unitarians of England(45); he was honoured with a public dinner by the East India Company(46); and, as part of his public activities, he submitted three papers on the Revenue System

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\*Some further idea of his love of liberty may be formed from the fact that on his way to England, when his boat touched the Cape of Good Hope, though seriously injured and made lame for several months by an accident, he insisted upon being carried to a French vessel where he saw the flag of liberty flying, so that he might be able to do homage to it. The sight of the glorious tri-colour kindled his enthusiasm and made him for the time being insensible to pain. The French received him warmly and he was conducted over the vessel beneath the revolutionary flag. When returning he shouted, unmindful of his pain, "Glory, glory, glory to France!"

of India, the Judicial System of India, and the Material Condition of India, before a Committee of the House of Commons. At the Coronation of William IV, he was honoured with a place amongst Foreign Ambassadors, and was personally presented to the King(47).

In 1832 when the Reform Bill came up for discussion, he threw himself entirely into the spirit of that Bill, and went so far as to make a public declaration that, in case the objects of that Bill were defeated, he would give up his residence in the dominions of England, and would settle down in America(48). During this year also he republished some of his Indian tracts for the information of his English friends, and visited France towards the end of the year, where he had the honour of dining with the French King more than once (49). In the beginning of 1833 he returned to England, was present at the first sitting of the reformed Parliament, and had the satisfaction of seeing the appeal of his adversaries against the abolition of the *Suttee* rejected(50). It was in this year also that the East India Company's charter was renewed, conferring solid privileges on the Indian people, a result towards which the Raja had earnestly worked(51).

Visit to  
France.

### LAST DAYS

In the beginning of September of that year he visited Bristol at the urgent invitation of his Unitarian friends, with a view to give his fatigued constitution a much-needed rest previous to his return to his native land. But alas! Providence had ruled otherwise. Within a few days of his arrival he was attacked with a fatal malady(52) which terminated his noble career on the 27th of September. Miss Hare, the niece [? sister—*Ed.*] of his friend Mr. David Hare of Calcutta, who attended during his last moments, says that he finally closed his lips with the word, *AUM*, the well-known Vedic syllable meaning the Supreme Being(53). His remains were followed to the grave by his Indian attendants and a few Unitarian friends(54). His mortal remains now rest in the Arno's Vale Cemetery at Bristol, over which his friend and disciple, Dwarkanath Tagore, during his visit to England, built a beautiful mausoleum(55).

Illness  
and Death.

# SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES\*

By

THE EDITOR

## (1) Rammohun's Birth-year:

Some uncertainty exists as to the actual year of Rammohun Roy's birth. The year most frequently used is that given on his tomb at Arno's Vale Cemetery at Bristol, erected by his friend Dwarkanath Tagore, *viz.*, 1774; but Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy* (First Edition, London, 1900; Indian Edition by Dr. Hem Chandra Sarkar, Calcutta, 1913), gives the year as 1772 on the following authorities:—"The Rev. C. H. A. Dall, in a letter to the *Sunday Mirror* of January 18, 1880, reported that Rammohun's younger son, Rama Prasad Roy, said in 1858, before a circle of friends and clients in Calcutta,—'My father was born at Radhanagore, in the month of May, 1772; or, according to the Bengali Era, in the month of *Jaishtha*, 1179.' Mr. Dall asked for the day of birth; but Rama Prasad was unable to give this. The fact has since, however, been supplied by another lineal descendant of Rammohun, Babu Lalit Mohun Chatterji, who has stated that Rammohun was born in the year 1772 on the 22nd day of May."

## (2) Rammohun's Birthplace:

Radhanagore or Raghunathpur, the birthplace of Rammohun, is a village situated in the Arambagh Sub-division of the District of Hooghly, immediately north of a big village named Khanakul-Krishnanagore on the right bank of the river Kana-Darakeshawar. Radhanagore during Rammohun's time was within the district of Burdwan.

## (3) Rammohun's Grandfather and Father:

Rammohun Roy describes his grandfather, Braja Benode Roy, as having been, "at various times, chief of different districts during the administration of His Highness the Nawab Mohabut Jung" of Murshidabad, and his father, Ram Kanto Roy, as "a man of property," who "rented a farm from Government, the revenue of which was lakhs of rupees." [See Rammohun's Petition to Lord Minto, Governor-General, dated Bhagalpur, 12th April, 1809: *The Modern Review*, June, 1929, pp. 682-685]. Besides holding landed property himself, Ramkanta, towards the latter part of his life, managed and controlled the Zemindary of Rani Bishan Kumari, mother of Tejchand of Burdwan. Shortly before his death, however, he was heavily involved in debt with the Burdwan

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\*These "Notes" have been written with a view to supplementing the *Story of Rammohun Roy's life* by Pandit Sivanath Sastri in the preceding pages.—Editor.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Raj under which he held in fann a large portion of a Zemindary. [For an interesting account of some of the law-suits in which the Roy family had been involved, readers are referred to an article in the *Calcutta Review* for August 1931, entitled "A Chapter in the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy" (mainly based on State Records), from the pen of Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji.]

### (4) Rammohun's Marriages:

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, says: "While yet a mere child, his father married him three times. The first bride died at 'a very early age' (not specified), and after her death, as we learn from William Adam's letters, his father, when he was only about nine years of age, married him within an interval of less than a twelve-month to two different wives."

Rammohun's second wife died in 1824, and his third wife, who survived him, died in 1858.

### (5) Education at Patna: Mahomedan influences.

## RAMMOHUN ROY : STORY OF HIS LIFE

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet quotes in her *Life and Letters of Rammohun Roy* the following passage from Dr. Lant Carpenter's *Review of the Labours, Opinions and Character of Rammohun Roy* (1833) :— "Without disputing the authority of his father, he often sought from him information as to the reasons of his faith; he obtained no satisfaction; and he at last determined, at the early age of 15, to leave the paternal home and sojourn for a time in the Thibet, that he might see another form of religious faith." This statement, Dr. Carpenter adds, *he heard from the Raja himself* in London. In his Arabic introduction to *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (1804 ?), it is interesting to note, Rammohun mentions that he had travelled in the remotest parts of the world, in plains as well as in mountainous regions.

In a memoir of Rammohun Roy by Rev. K. S. Macdonald, published in Calcutta in 1879, it is stated :—"While at Patna he must have heard a good deal of Buddhism, if not also of the religious practices of the aboriginal tribes inhabiting the hills of Central and Southern India and the slopes of the Himalayas. By going to Thibet he would come into closer contact with Buddhism, and on his way thither might also learn something of the devil-worship of the aborigines. In Thibet he spent two or three years disputing daily with the worshippers of the living Lama, who frequently passed from quiet ratiocination to angry abuse of the stranger. He, however, met with much kindness, as many a stranger has before and since in kindred circumstances, from the female sex, a kindness, which, forty years after, he said had made him always feel respect and gratitude towards the gentle sex."

### (7) Stay at Benares:

"All accounts agree," writes Miss Collet, "that he did not remain long under the family roof, the incompatibility being too great. Our only actual knowledge as to his next step is derived from his own evidence in the Burdwan law suit [instituted by Raja Tejchand against Rammohun and his nephew Govinda Prasad Roy in June, 1823, for the recovery of a debt incurred by their father and grandfather respectively] in which he states that ' . . . he had, during his lifetime, separated from him (deceased father) and the rest of his family, in consequence of his altered habits of life and change of opinions, which did not permit their living together.' "

It is not very clear, however, how long Rammohun lived at Benares. William Adam, the Unitarian friend and colleague of Rammohun, wrote in 1826 (quoted by Miss Collet) that Rammohun, "was obliged to reside for ten to twelve years in Benares." This brings the date of his stay there to about 1802. On the other hand Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji records in a Chronology of Rammohun's early life (from 1774 to 1815), which he has compiled mainly from State Records and has very kindly placed at our disposal, that Rammohun was looking after the Zemindary affairs of his father from 1796 to 1799. In support of this statement he mentions the three Bengali letters (dated 22nd March 1796, 21st February, 1798 and 28th February 1799), printed in the appendix to Nagendra Nath Chatterjee's Bengali Biography of the Raja,

(3rd edition, pp. 571-73). All these letters refer to the Bhursotti and other *mahals* held in farm by Rammohun's father in Burdwan district. In the mixed Persian and Bengali records of the Bengal Government Mr. Banerji has also discovered a *Kistbandi* Bond for Rs. 17,989-6-0 executed by Rammohun Roy of Nangoodpada (Langoolpara [?], near Radhanagore), dated 1206 B.S. (1799 ?) relating to Rameshwarpur and Govindapur. Mr. Banerji has also found a list of *Patni taluks* held at this time (1796-99) by Rammohun Roy in his own name under the Burdwan Raj, the total *jamas* of which ran up to several thousands of rupees. All these facts, besides proving that Rammohun had his own independent sources of income before the death of his father (1803), go to show that his stay at Benares could not have been in any case a long one, as is generally supposed.

#### (8) Father and Son:

Miss Collet in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy* quotes William Adam as follows:—"Rammohun Roy in conversation mentioned to me with much feeling that he had stood by the death-bed of his father, who with his expiring breath continued to invoke his God—'Ram! Ram!' with a strength of faith and a fervor of pious devotion which it was impossible not to respect although the son had then ceased to cherish any religious veneration for the family deity."

#### (9) Service under the East India Company:

Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his *Chronology of Rammohun's early life*, previously referred to, maintains that during the period of 1800-1802, Rammohun was "in some way connected" with the Sadar Dewani Adalat (Supreme Court: established in 1773) and the College of Fort William (founded in 1800) in Calcutta. Mr. Banerji has, by his researches, definitely established that Rammohun first took service under the East India Company on the 7th March, 1803, in the capacity of Dewan (Revenue Officer) to Mr. Thomas Woodforde, Acting Collector of Daeca Jelalpur, the district now known as Faridpur. On Mr. Woodforde taking leave on grounds of ill health, Rammohun too resigned the office held by him on the 14th May, 1803. Shortly after this Rammohun returned to Radhanagore to find his father Ramkanta Roy in death-bed. Mr. Woodforde, after having regained his health and taken up his new appointment as Registrar of the Murshidabad Court of Appeal and Circuit sometime after February 1804, Rammohun joined him there.

#### (10) Rammohun and Mr. Digby:

Rammohun first made the acquaintance of Mr. John Digby in 1805 at Ramgarh (near Ranhi) where the latter was Registrar of the Zila Court and Assistant to the Magistrate. When Mr. Digby was appointed Acting Magistrate at Ramgarh, Rammohun acted under him in the capacity of Sheristadar of the local Fauzdari Court—from August to October, 1806. From January to June, 1808, Rammohun held the post of *private* Munshi to Mr. Digby while the latter was in charge of the Jessore Collectorate. On the 1st January, 1809, Rammohun moved to Bhagalpur

where Mr. Digby was posted as Registrar of the Zila Court. Here also Rammohun Roy was in the *private* employ of Mr. Digby. He next followed Mr. Digby to Rangpur where the latter was appointed substantive Collector. The Dewanship of the Collector's office falling vacant in December, 1809, Mr. Digby filled the post by appointing Rammohun ("a man of very respectable family and excellent education, fully competent to discharge the duties of such an office"), pending confirmation by the Board of Revenue. The Board having declined, after much correspondence between them and Mr. Digby, to approve Rammohun's appointment as Dewan, he held the office for a period of about 5 months only—from December, 1809 to April, 1810. [The correspondence between the Board and Mr. Digby was, for the first time, reproduced *in extenso* in the Presidential Address of Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari at the eleventh session of the North-Bengal Bengalee Literary Conference held at Rangpur in 1928.] Rammohun, however, did not leave Rangpur, because, in the month of August in the same year (1810), Mr. Digby appointed him as Guardian of the minor proprietors of the estate of the late Rajkishore Chowdhury of Udashi Pargana, Rangpur. This post he held till March, 1815, when the minors having attained their age of majority, Rammohun came and took up his residence in Calcutta.

For a fuller account of the career of Rammohun Roy in the service of the East India Company reference may be made to Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji's illuminating article on the subject in the *Modern Review* for May, 1930.

## (11) Rammohun Roy at Rangpur:

published in 1743 (Saka, 1821). On page 1 of his book he says that Rammohun had been disseminating his religious views in a Bengali edition of the Vedanta and in another treatise composed in mixed Persian and Arabic." A copy of the second edition of *Jnananjana*, as revised by Madhusudan Tarkalankar and published from Calcutta in 1245 B. S. (1838), Mr. Banerji has found in the rich library of Raja Radhakanta Deb Bahadur of Sobha Bazar, Calcutta.

It only remains to be added that Gaurikanta Bhattacharyya was Dewan of the Judge's Court at Rangpur.

## (12) Rammohun's Knowledge of English:

Miss Collet in her biography of Rammohun says, that he only began to learn English at the age of 22 (1796). In his introduction to the English edition of Rammohun Roy's translation of the *Kena Upanishad* and *Abridgment of the Vedant* (London, 1817), Mr. John Digby says that when he first became acquainted with Rammohun (1805), he "could merely speak it well enough to be understood upon the most common topics of discourse, but could not write it with any degree of correctness." Mr. Digby adds, that during the five years he was Collector in the East India Company's Civil Service, Rammohun, "by perusing all my public correspondence with diligence and attention as well as by corresponding and conversing with European gentlemen, acquired so correct a knowledge of the English language as to be enabled to write and speak it with considerable accuracy. He was also in the constant habit of reading the English newspapers, of which the Continental politics chiefly interested him."

In a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature*, London, Mr. James Silk Buckingham, Editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, wrote on August 4, 1823:—"In June, 1818, the month of my first arrival in Calcutta, I was introduced to Rammohun Roy, at the house of Mr. Eneas Mackintosh (now in London) and was surprised at the unparalleled accuracy of his language, never having before heard any foreigner of Asiatic birth speak so well, and esteeming his fine choice of words as worthy the imitation even of Englishmen. My first hour's conversation with him was in Arabic, that being the Oriental language most familiar to me, and not knowing at first that he spoke English with ease and fluency; but accident changing our discourse to English, I was delighted and surprised at his perfection in this tongue. . . . In English, he is competent to converse freely on the most abstruse subjects and to argue more closely and coherently than most men that I know."

In a letter to Rammohun, Jeremy Bentham, the celebrated English Philosopher, wrote: "Your works are made known to me by a book, in which I read a style, which, but for the name of a Hindu, I should certainly have ascribed to the pen of a superiorly educated and instructed Englishman." In the same letter, while praising the great work of James Mill on the History of India, he observed: "though as to style I wish I could with truth and sincerity pronounce it equal to yours."



# RAMMOHUN ROY : STORY OF HIS LIFE

## (13) Rammohun's Paternal Property: Question of Inheritance: Litigation:

The question whether Rammohun ever came into possession of any portion of his father's property is still enveloped in obscurity. In the absence of sufficient materials, the subject has not received at the hands of his biographers the treatment it calls for. Rammohun's own statement on this point is to be found in his defence in the suit brought against him and his nephew Govindaprasad by Raja Tejchand of Burdwan in the Provincial Court of Calcutta on the 16th of June, 1823. [Quoted by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article on "A Chapter in the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy" in the *Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, pp. 156—179]. This suit was for the realization of Rupees fifteen thousand and odd, being principal and interest on an instalment bond executed by Rammohun's father Ram Kanto Roy for arrears of land-revenue. In his defence Rammohun stated *inter alia* (1) that he had separated from his father during the latter's life-time; (2) that by his own exertion he had acquired property separate from that of his father; (3) that he had not inherited any portion of his father's property and so was not responsible for his father's debts; and (4) that the suit was barred by limitation. The Provincial Court of Calcutta accepted the plea of limitation and dismissed the suit whereupon the Raja of Burdwan preferred an appeal to the Sadar Diwani Adalat which, by its judgment, dated the 10th of November, 1831, confirmed the decision of the trial Court.

It is thus seen that Rammohun himself says that he had not inherited any portion of his father's property, and so we must suppose that when Ram Kanto Roy died in 1803, he was succeeded by Rammohun's elder brother Jugmohan. This Jugmohan died in 1811, and on his death his property should, in ordinary circumstances, have passed to his son and heir Govindaprasad, who, in that case, would have been in possession of the estate left by Ram Kanto. Most probably this is what actually happened. But, a few years after Jugmohan's death, we find there is a litigation between Rammohun and his nephew Govindaprasad, for in a letter written by him to his uncle, dated the 14th of *Kartik*, 1228 B. S., corresponding to the 29th of October, 1819, he acknowledges that, at the instigation of other people, he had lodged a false suit against his uncle in the Equity Division of the Supreme Court claiming from him an account of the property. [Rammohun Roy's *Bengalee Biography* by Nagendra Nath Chatterjee—3rd ed., p. 243]. The property which he speaks of seems to be the property left by his father Jugmohan, for, on the 27th of January, 1818, we find, in the instructions issued by the Board of Revenue to the Collector of Midnapur, the fact mentioned that the "property left by Jugmohan is at present contested in the Courts of Justice." [Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 158.]

We may reasonably infer from the facts given above that sometime after Jugmohan's death Rammohun came to be in possession of the property left by him, though in what capacity it is impossible for us to determine with the scanty materials before us, and, that some time before

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1818, Govindaprasad brought a suit for accounts concerning this property against Rammohun in the Equity Division of the Supreme Court. There was a contest, as appears from the abovementioned letter of Govindaprasad to Rammohun, and it is reasonable to assume that this suit and no other is indicated by the instructions of the Board of Revenue already referred to. Another supposition might be made, and this is what has been advanced by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji (*Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 157),—that Govindaprasad was in possession of the property and that it was Rammohun who started the litigation. There is no material before us to countenance such a hypothesis, which, further, seems to be irreconcilable with the aforesaid suit for accounts of the property against Rammohun, for how could Rammohun be sued for accounts unless he was in possession of the property? Mr. Digby, in a letter to the Board of Revenue, dated the 22nd of September, 1824, referred to by Mr. Banerji in his article, speaks of the impoverishment of Govindaprasad through litigation with his uncle and mentions only of his unsuccessful suit in this connection; it is not likely that he should have forgotten to mention Rammohun's suit against his nephew, if such a suit had really been instituted. However, this is all speculation, and we only land on solid ground when we affirm that this litigation between uncle and nephew was not fought to the bitter end, but that Govindaprasad at last withdrew his suit for accounts against his uncle and asked the latter's forgiveness.

The current biographies of Rammohun speak of suits instituted by his mother against him, and a statement of William Adam to this effect in his *Lecture on the Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy* (Calcutta, 1879, pp. 6-7) is quoted in this connection. Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji has investigated this matter, but *so far* he has not been able to find in the State Records any paper which go to show that a suit against Rammohun was instituted by his mother. He thinks that Mr. Adam's statement was a wrong description, due to faded recollection of the litigation between Rammohun and his nephew Govindaprasad (*Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 157).

As regards the motives which led Govindaprasad to institute his suit for accounts against Rammohun, it is to be noticed that he himself acknowledges that he did so *at the instigation of other people* [Nagendra Nath Chatterjee's *Bengalee Biography of the Raja*, 3rd ed., p. 143]. The contemporaries of Rammohun who have written about him generally speak of his being subjected to vexatious litigations on account of the unorthodoxy of his religious views. They might or might not have been right; their respect and friendship might have led them to overstate the case for him; but we must always remember that the real motives behind any litigation are very seldom, if at all, disclosed in complaints and written statements, and Mr. Banerji's article referred to above are based *only* on such documents.

In this connection, we must also notice a statement of Dr. Lant Carpenter to the effect that Rammohun Roy had stated of a series of unsuccessful legal proceedings against him to deprive him of caste, and thereby of his patrimonial inheritance. [Mary Carpenter's *The Last*

*Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy*, 2nd ed., p. 9]. This is entirely at variance with the defence taken up by Rammohun Roy in the suit brought against him by the Raja of Burdwan in 1823, and the materials at present available of the litigation between Rammohun and Govindaprasad do not throw any light on this point. It seems that there was a very confused notion in the minds of Rammohun's biographers of the litigation in which Rammohun was involved, and we can only hope further researches might throw some light on this point.

## (14) Rammohun Roy's Calcutta Houses :

It was early in 1815 (and not in 1814 as is generally supposed) that Rammohun Roy came from Rangpur and settled in Calcutta to begin his life-work. Before he, however, came here, a house had been built for him, according to his instructions, by his half-brother, Ramtanu Roy, and "furnished in the English style." This was the house known as his "Maniktala Garden-house," and is now No. 113, Upper Circular Road, occupied by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, North District, Calcutta. It stood on extensive grounds covering 15 bighas, or roughly 5 acres of land, its the then southern boundary extending up to Sukea Street. It appears from a public sale notification of 9th January, 1830, published in a contemporary vernacular paper of Calcutta, that the house was put to auction shortly before Rammohun's departure for Europe. [*Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Part I, 1818-1830 : Compiled and Edited by Brajendra Nath Banerji : Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad : p. 132]. It was at this house that Rammohun received his many distinguished friends, both Indian and European, among whom Fanny Parkes and Mrs. Heber, the wife of the famous Bishop, have each recorded their interesting visit to the Raja. Rammohun owned another house in Calcutta, which was known as his "Simla house." It now stands on Amherst Street, No. 85. This was the house occupied by Rammohun's sons, Radha Prasad (a Vakeel of the Supreme Court) and Rama Prasad (the first Indian to be appointed a Judge of the Calcutta High Court), during and after his life-time. [See the article—"Rammohun Roy as a Citizen of Calcutta"—by Nalin C. Ganguli and Alin C. Ganguli in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, 15th Sept., 1928].

## (15) Friends and Followers of Rammohun :

[See Appendix D].

## (16) Rammohun's Early Publications: Notice in Europe.

Shortly after Rammohun's first English work, "*An Abridgment of the Vedant*," appeared in 1816, the *Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature* of England noticed it in a lengthy review. It said *inter alia* :—"Two literary phenomena of a singular nature have very recently been exhibited in India. The first is—a Hindu Deist, Rammohun Roy, a Brahmin, has published a small work, in the present year, at Calcutta, entitled *An Abridgment of the Vedant, &c.* It contains a collection of very remarkable texts from the Vedas, in which the principles

of natural religion are delivered, not without dignity; and which treat all worship to inferior beings, together with the observance of rites and seasons, and the distinctions of food, as the aids of an imperfect religion, which may be altogether disregarded by those who have attained to the knowledge and love of God."

That the interest in Rammohun's work and personality was not confined to England only, will be illustrated by the following quotation from a contemporary French pamphlet written by the Abbe Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, which presented several interesting features of the life of Rammohun, as viewed by a foreigner. "Every six months," the pamphlet ran, "he publishes a little tract in Bengali and in English developing his system of Theism: and he is always ready to answer the pamphlets published at Calcutta or Madras in opposition to him. . . . He takes pleasure in controversy; but although far from deficient in philosophy, or in knowledge, he distinguishes himself more by his logical mode of reasoning than by his general views. He appears to feel the advantage which it gives him with the Methodists, some of whom are endeavouring to convert him. . . . He asserts likewise that he has found nothing in European books equal to the scholastic philosophy of the Hindoos. . . . Rammohun Roy is not yet forty years old; he is tall and robust; his regular features and habitually grave countenance assume a most pleasing appearance when he is animated. He appears to have a slight disposition to melancholy." "The moderation," adds Abbe Gregorie, "with which he repels the attacks on his writings, the force of his arguments, and his profound knowledge of the sacred books of the Hindoos, are proofs of his fitness for the work he has undertaken; and the pecuniary sacrifices he has made, show a disinterestedness which cannot be encouraged or admired too warmly."

#### (17) The Serampore Controversy:

Rammohun conducted the controversy with the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore with a dignity which admirably contrasted with the tone of his opponents. When Dr. Marshman declared that Hinduism evidently owed its origin to the "Father of Lies" alone, he answered: "We must recollect that we have engaged in solemn religious controversy and not in retorting abuse against each other." The Editor of the *India Gazette*, a contemporary Calcutta journal, adverting to the controversy wrote in his paper: "It still further exhibited the acuteness of his mind, the logical power of his intellect and *the unrivalled good temper with which he could argue.*" (The italics are ours.—Ed.).

#### (18) Conversion of Rev. William Adam:

The conversion by Rammohun of the Rev. William Adam, one of the Baptist Missionaries of Serampore, from orthodox Trinitarian Christianity to Unitarianism greatly scandalised the preachers of the Christian faith. So great was the annoyance caused, that the then Bishop of Calcutta actually asked for the opinion of the Attorney-General in England if Mr. Adam could not, for his act of heresy, be deported

from India under some antiquated provision in the statute book. The Attorney-General assured the Bishop that "those days were passed," and, consequently, Mr. Adam remained in Calcutta. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article on "English Impressions of Rammohun Roy before his Visit to England," *The Modern Review*, March, 1932, p. 280].

## (19—21) Rammohun's Support to the Unitarian Cause:

The Calcutta Unitarian Committee was formed in 1821. Mr. William Adam, in a letter, under the date June 26, 1827, writes to Mr. R. Dutton :—"Its present members are Theodore Dickens, a Barrister of the Supreme Court; George James Gordon, a merchant of the firm of Mackintosh & Co., William Tate, an Attorney; B. W. Macleod, a Surgeon in the Company's service; Norman Kerr, an uncovenanted servant of the Company, Rammohun Roy, Dwarkanath Thakoor, Prusunna Coomar Thakoor, Radhaprasud Roy [Rammohun's eldest son] and myself." The objects of the Unitarian Committee were "the promotion of education, rational discussion, and the publication of books both in English and in the native languages." Rammohun was the life and soul of the Association. The Anglo-Hindu School started under it, was almost exclusively supported by him. The "Unitarian Press" was entirely his property. Mr. Adam, after his secession with the Triunitarian Missionaries of Serampore, in his new rôle of Unitarian Minister, seems to have depended for his financial support chiefly on Rammohun. And what all this meant for Rammohun has been told by James Silk Buckingham, who wrote to a friend :—"He has done all this to the great detriment of his private interests, being rewarded by the coldness and jealousy of all the great functionaries of Church and State in India, and supporting the Unitarian Chapel, the Unitarian Press, and the expense of his own publications. . . . out of a private fortune of which he devotes more than one-third to acts of the purest philanthropy and benevolence." The cause of Unitarianism in Calcutta did not, however, prosper much in spite of all the help and support that Rammohun gave it. On July, 1823, we find Rammohun writing to a friend :—"From the disappointment which we have met in our endeavour to promote the cause of Unitarianism, I scarcely entertain any hope of success." [See the *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, by Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, Chapter IV.]

## (22) Mr. William Adam's Subsequent Career:

Mr. William Adam subsequently came to be appointed as the Commissioner of Vernacular Education in Bengal, Behar and Orissa, during the administration of Lord William Bentinck. He was also the author of the then Educational Reports published by Government. In 1845 he delivered a lecture in Boston, U.S.A., on the "Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy," which the late Rakhaldas Halder published in Calcutta in 1879. Mr. Adam's executrix supplied Miss Collet with "much interesting matter from his private letters relating to the Raja" when she was engaged in writing his biography.

(23) The First Location of the Brahmo Samaj:

No. 48, Chitpore Road, Jorasanko, was the historic building in which the Samaj was first located. It was owned by Ram Kamal Basu (not Kamal Lochan Basu as popularly known), who was well-known in Calcutta as "Firingi Kamal Basu," a resident of Chandernagore. The house, which is still standing, was, previous to its use as Brahmo Samaj, occupied for some time by the Hindu College (Fstd. 1816), and it was this house, again, that Rammohun Roy secured, in 1830, for Alexander Duff, the celebrated Scotch Missionary, for opening his English School, —of which more later.

(24) The First Sermon of the Brahmo Samaj:

Though popularly described as *Brohmo Sabha*, the real name of the new church was *Brahmo Samaj*, which is given in the title page of the first sermon preached, on the date of its opening, by the Minister, Pandit Ram Chandra Bidyabagis (Sarma),—a copy of the original edition of which is in the possession of Mr. Brajendra Nath Bauernji. The sermon was on the spiritual worship of God. The text, which was taken from various parts of the Hindu scriptures, read, "God is One only without an equal, in whom abide all worlds and their inhabitants. Thus he who mentally perceives the Supreme Spirit in all creatures, acquires perfect equanimity, and shall be absorbed into the highest essence, even into the Almighty." It was translated into English by Tarachand Chakravarti, the first Secretary of the Samaj, and published. In sending copies to a European friend, Rammohun spoke of it "as exhibiting the simplicity, comprehensiveness and tolerance which distinguish the religious belief and worship formerly adopted by one of the most ancient nations on earth and still adhered to by the more enlightened portion of their posterity." [Reference may be made for further details to an article entitled "Foundation of the Brahmo Samaj" by Mr. N. C. Ganguly in the *Modern Review* for September, 1928.]

(25) The Dharma Sabha:

The principal promoter of the "Dharma Sabha," the rival organization of the Brahmo Samaj, or "Brohmo Sabha" (as it was popularly called), was Radha Kanto Deb (subsequently knighted and decorated with the title of Raja), scion of the well-known family of the Debs of Sobhabazar, Calcutta, and compiler of the monumental Sanskrit Encyclopædia—*Sabda Kalpadrum*. With him were associated many of the then notable Hindu citizens of Calcutta, among them being Maharaja Kali Kissen Bahadur, Dewan Ramkamal Sen (grand-father of Keshub Chunder Sen), Jaynarain Mitter, Babu Baishnabdas Mallik, Babu Nilmoni Dey, Babu Gopi Mohan Deb, and Babu Harimohan Tagore. But the right-hand man of Radha Kanto Deb was one Bhawani Charan Banerjee, who, for a time, assisted Rammohun Roy in editing his Bengali Weekly, *Sambad-Kaumudi*, but left the paper, as a protest, when it commenced the agitation against *Suttee*. It was with him as Editor that the *Samachar Chandrika* was started as a rival paper to the *Sambad-Kaumudi*. The

*Chandrika* became the organ of the Dharma Sabha when it came to be established shortly after. The object of the association was to enable "the excellent and the noble"—so ran the explanation of the *Samachar Chandrika*—to "unite and continually devise means for protecting our religion and our excellent customs and usages." At its first meeting, held on the 17th January, 1830, at the Sanskrit College, one of the members of the Committee significantly remarked, with "the concurrence of all present," that "those Hindus who do not follow the rites of Hindu religion should be excluded from the Hindu Society." . . . "No names, however, were mentioned," a reticence which the *Chandrika* hoped would ere long be laid aside. [For a report of the proceedings of the meeting referred to above, readers may see pp. 149—152 of *Brajendra Nath Banerji's Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. I: Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad.]

## (26) The Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Samaj:

This most remarkable document, dated January 8th, 1830, sets forth the transfer of the property as *from* Dwarkanath Tagore, Kaleenauth Roy, Prusunno Coomar Tagore, Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy to the three Trustees, Boykontonauth Roy, Radapersaud Roy and Ramnauth Tagore. [The names are spelt as they are actually in the deed.]

The terms of the Trust are that the Trustees—

"shall at all times permit the said building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises, with their appurtenances, to be used occupied, enjoyed, applied and appropriated, as and for a place of Public Meeting, of all sorts of descriptions of people, without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner;

"For the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable, and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe but not under, or by any other name, designation, or title peculiarly used for, and applied to, any particular Being, or Beings, by any man, or set of men, whatsoever;

"And that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of any thing, shall be admitted within the messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments, and premises; and that no sacrifice, offering, or oblation of any kind or thing, shall ever be permitted therein; and that no animal or living creature shall, within or on the said messuage, building, land, tenements hereditaments and premises, be deprived of life, either for religious purposes or for food;

"And that no eating and drinking (except such as shall be necessary, by any accident, for the preservation of life), feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon;

"And that, in conducting the said worship or adoration, no object, animate or inanimate, that has been, or is or shall hereafter become, or be recognized, as an object of worship, by any man or set of men shall be reviled, or slightly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching, praying, or in the hymns, or other mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said messuage or building;

"And that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered, made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the Promotion of charity, morality, piety, bene-

volence, virtue, and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds;

"And also, that a person of good repnte, and well-known for his knowledge, piety, and morality, be employed by the said trustees . . . . . as a resident superintendent, and for the purpose of superintending the worship so to be performed as is hereinbefore stated and expressed; and that such worship be performed daily, or at least as often as once in seven days. . . . ."

Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his *History of the British Colonies*, in giving an account of the opening ceremony of the new Samaj buildings (at present 55, Upper Chitpore Road—the house occupied by the Adi Brahmoo Samaj) says: "The institution was opened by the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, accompanied by the writer (the only European present) in 1830. There were about five hundred Hindus present and among them many Brahmins, who, after the prayers and singing of hymns had been concluded, received gifts in money to a considerable extent."—[See Sophia Dobson Collet's *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, Chapter VII.]

#### (27) The Vedanta College:

Of the Vedanta College established [ 1816 ?] by Rammohun, William Adam writes in a letter, under the date July 27, 1826 (quoted by Miss Collet):—"Rammohun Roy has lately built a small but very neat and handsome college, which he calls the Vedant College in which a few youths are at present instructed by a very eminent pandit in Sanskrit literature with a view to the propagation and defence of Hindn Unitarianism. With this institution he is also willing to connect instructions in European Science and learning, and in Christian Unitarianism, provided the instructions are conveyed in the Bengali or Sanskrit language."

#### (28) Anti-Suttee Vigilance:

Miss Collet says that it was in the year 1818, that Rammohun's influence in the abolition of *Suttee* began to be definitely felt. He used to go down to the Calcutta burning-grounds and try to avert the *Suttee* sacrifices by earnest persuasion. Two of such cases have been recorded, one being in the *Asiatic Journal* for March, 1818. In these efforts he had, no wonder, often to incur the displeasure and insult of the relatives of the *Suttee*.

#### (29) Aversion to Polygamy:

Miss Collet writes:—"It is interesting to learn from Mr. William Adam's letter of 1826, Rammohun's personal antipathy to polygamy. He was, as we have previously related, married by his father at nine years of age to two child-wives. To both he felt himself bound to remain faithful, but on the death of one (in 1824), he became in practice as in theory a monogamist. It is sad to find that even so his married life was not too happy. The *Asiatic Journal*, for November, 1833, states in its obituary notice that 'Rammohun Roy has left in India a wife from whom he has been separated (on what account we know not) for



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some years.' Babu N. N. Chatterjee states that Rammohun 'lived apart from his wives simply because they were Hindus, and he was considered an outcast by them. His wives did not like to live with him.' "

So strongly was Rammohun opposed to polygamy that (Mr. Adam tells us) he inserted clauses in his will disinheriting any son or more remote descendant who had more than one wife at the same time.

### (30) Congratulatory Address to Lord Bentinck:

The address congratulating Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General of India, on his promulgating the decree abolishing *Suttee*, was presented on the 16th January, 1830, at Government House, Calcutta. It appears from a contemporary account that Rammohun himself led the deputation and Munshi Kalinath Roy of Taki, a friend and collaborator of Rammohun, read the address, which, it is most interesting to note, was in Bengali, an English translation being read afterwards. Both the original and the translation were subsequently published in the *Government Gazette*. [See *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*—B. N. Banerji, Vol. I, p. 154.]

### (31) Establishment of the Hindu College:

Rammohun not only "saw the future" as it would inevitably be as a result of India's contacts and conflicts with modern European thought through British rule, but applied himself to lay the foundation upon which Modern India must be built to meet the requirements of the new conditions towards which the country was consciously or unconsciously moving. Few people of his generation, if indeed any, could claim a more appreciative estimate of the cultural value of Sanskrit or Arabic education. But notwithstanding the invaluable treasures of those two literatures, the Raja felt that they were not inspired by the modern ideal, nor suited to the requirements of the modern age. The Raja saw that what was absolutely needed in India then, was a knowledge of the objective sciences that had attained the highest degree of perfection among the nations of Europe. He wanted a Renaissance in India, which would do for the Indian people and Indian culture what the Revival of Learning had done in Europe. This was the motive underlying his letter to Lord Amherst; and it was with this object that the Raja joined hands with David Hare and others in founding the Hindu College (Estd., 20th January, 1817).

The true history of the origin of the Hindu College (also known under the name of the "*Vidyālaya*", "Anglo-Indian College", "*Mahapatshala*" and "Native Hindu College"—later transformed into the Presidency College) is given in a letter which Sir Hyde East, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, addressed, on the 18th May, 1816, to his friend Mr. J. Harrington, a brother-judge, then in England. The credit for unearthing this valuable document belongs to Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, and to him we are indebted for the extracts from the letter of Sir Edward Hyde East given below, extracts which will speak for themselves.

Wrote Sir Edward:—"An interesting and curious scene has lately been exhibited here, which shows that all things pass under change in due season. About the beginning of May, a Brahmin of Calcutta, [Rammohun Roy], whom I knew, and who is well known for his intelligence and active interference among the principal Native inhabitants, and also intimate with many of our own gentlemen of distinction, called upon me and informed me, that many of the leading Hindus were desirous of forming an establishment for the education of their children in a liberal manner as practised by Europeans of condition; and desired that I would lend them my aid towards it, by having a meeting held under my sanction. . . After his departure I communicated to the Governor-General what had passed, who laid my communication before the Supreme Council, all the members of which approved of the course I had taken, and signified, through his Lordship, that they saw no objection to my permitting the parties to meet at my house. . . The meeting was accordingly held at my house on the 14th of May, 1816, at which 50 and upwards of the most respectable Hindu inhabitants of rank or wealth attended, including also the principal Pandits; when a sum of nearly half a lac of rupees was subscribed, and many more subscriptions were promised. . .

"Talking afterwards with several of the company, before I proceeded to open the business of the day, I found that one of them in particular, a Brahmin of good caste, and a man of wealth and influence, was mostly set against Rammohun Roy . . . (who has lately written against the Hindu idolatry, and upbraids his countrymen pretty sharply). He expressed a hope that no subscription would be received from Rammohun Roy. I asked, why not? 'Because he has chosen to separate himself from us, and to attack our religion'. 'I do not know', I observed, 'what Rammohun's religion is'—(I have heard it is a kind of Unitarianism)—'not being acquainted or having had any communication with him; but I hope that my being a Christian, and a sincere one, to the best of my ability, will be no reason for your refusing my subscription to your undertaking'. This I said in a tone of gaiety; and he answered readily in the same style, 'No, not at all; we shall be glad of your money; but it is a different thing with Rammohun Roy, who is a Hindu, and yet has publicly reviled us, and written against us and our religion'. . .

"Upon another occasion I had asked a very sensible Brahmin what it was that made some of his people so violent against Rammohun. He said, in truth, they did not like a man of his consequence to take open part against them; that he himself had advised Rammohun against it; he had told him that, if he found anything wrong among his countrymen, he should have endeavoured, by private advice and persuasion to amend it; but that the course he had taken set everybody against him, and would do no good in the end. They particularly disliked (and this I believe is at the bottom of the resentment) his associating himself so much as he does with Mussulmans, not with this or that Mussulman as a personal friend, but being continually surrounded by them, and

suspected to partake of means with them. . . They would rather be reformed by anybody else than by him."

In quoting the full text of the letter in his article on "Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer" in the pages of the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (June, 1930), Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji very rightly observes: "The above document makes it clear that Rammohun Roy was the prime mover in founding the Hindu College. The leading Hindus of Calcutta disliked his association with it, as he was regarded by them as a heretic and more of a Mussulman than a Hindu. Rammohun, therefore, very wisely, withdrew from the movement, lest the objects of the institution should be frustrated in consequence of his name appearing on the Committee of Management".

### (32) Rammohun's English School:

Sometime in 1816-17 Rammohun established an English School of his own in Calcutta (at Suripara) for the free instruction of Hindu boys. It was the first private seminary in this town and numbered about 200 pupils. Rammohun paid the entire expenses of the School. Afterwards he opened an English class at his own garden-house in Upper Circular Road in connection with the school, the most distinguished students of which were transferred to it. It was in charge of one Mr. Morecroft whom he paid Rs. 100 per mensem. Sometime after, he bought a plot of land at Simla near Cornwallis Square, which was then being laid out, and built a school-house on it in 1822. This school, according to Miss Collet, went by the name of "The Anglo-Hindu School." It was a free institution and was supported entirely by Rammohun, assisted to a small extent by subscriptions from a few of his friends. The Unitarian Missionary, Rev. William Adam was, for some time, one of its 'Visitors', and Sandford Arnot, who was Assistant Editor of James Silk Buckingham's *Calcutta Journal* and acted as Secretary to Rammohun while he was in England, belonged to the teaching staff of this school. Maharshi Debendranath Tagore writing of this school in his autobiography says: "I was a student in Rammohun Roy's school at Hedua (Cornwallis Square). His son Ramaprasad was a class-mate of mine". When Rammohun sailed for England in November, 1830, the charge of the school devolved on its head master, Purna Chandra Mittra, and it came to be popularly known as "Purna Mittra's School". From January, 1834, the name of the school was changed to "The Indian Academy." The celebrated Bhudeb Mukherjee was a pupil at the Indian Academy.

An extremely interesting account of the Anglo-Hindu School has been unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji from the old files of the *Bengal Hurkaru* (January 10, 1828). We reproduce it below:—

"A public examination of Rammohun Roy's Anglo-Hindoo school took place, January 7, at the *Hurkaru* public rooms, when we had a proof of the strong interest felt in native improvement, afforded by the presence and continued attention to the proceedings of several of the principal merchants and gentlemen of Calcutta, besides natives. The number of boys examined appeared to be

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about fifty, but the number whose names are in the school register is between seventy and eighty. This institution is principally supported at the expense of Rammohun Roy, with the aid of a few philanthropic individuals, both among his own countrymen and Europeans, who are friendly to the communication of liberal education to the natives of this country; and it must have afforded a very high degree of pleasure to that distinguished individual, as well as to those who have aided him in his benevolent exertions, to observe the progress which several of the pupils have made in their studies. To the intelligent observer it must also have been an additional source of gratification, to notice among the scholars several of the children of the native gentlemen who contribute to the support of the school, in no respect distinguished from those who receive their education gratuitously.

"Besides three classes that were examined in reading, spelling, grammar, and translation, the first, or most advanced class, was also examined in Joyee's Scientific Dialogues on Mechanics and Astronomy, in the first sixteen propositions of the first book of Euclid, and in translating into Bengalee a passage of Voltaire's History of Charles XII of Sweden, in all of which they acquitted themselves apparently very much to the satisfaction of the auditors. Although this class appears to have made very little progress in mathematics, yet they were perfect masters of all that they professed to know: and one boy in particular, Bissonanth Mitter, was distinguished for the great facility with which he demonstrated the propositions assigned to him, and the clear apprehension he had formed of their import, and of the corollaries deducible from them."

### (33a) Letter to Lord Amherst on English Education:

The famous Bishop Heber, the Metropolitan of India, who put this letter [Dec. 11, 1823] into Lord Amherst's hands, wrote of it that "for its good English, good sense and forcible arguments, is a real curiosity, as coming from an Asiatic".

But how this remarkable letter, which, it can be claimed without exaggeration, stands up to this day as the embodiment of a truly national policy of modern education in India, was treated by the then Government will appear from the observations of the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction quoted by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article on "Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer" in the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (June, 1930). The President (Mr. J. H. Harington) wrote that "... it was entitled to no reply, as it has disingenuously assumed a character to which it has no pretensions. The application to Government against the cultivation of Hindu literature, and in favour of the substitution of European tuition, is made professedly on the part, and in the name of the natives of India. But it bears the signature of one individual alone, whose opinions are well known to be hostile to those entertained by almost all his countrymen. The letter of Rammohun Roy does not, therefore, express the opinion of any portion of the natives of India, and its assertion to that effect, is a dereliction of truth, which cancels the claim of its author to respectful consideration".

How completely, however, was Rammohun vindicated in his advocacy of Western education, along modern lines, will be borne out by the very deserved tribute that was paid to him in the Report of the Education Commission, appointed by Lord Ripon in 1882, which said:—

"It took twelve years of controversy, the advocacy of Macaulay, and the decisive action of a new Governor-General, before the Committee could, as a body, acquiesce in the policy urged by him [Rammohun"].

### (33b) Rammohun and Alexander Duff:

Rammohun Roy played a great part in drawing the Christian missions into the field of Indian education. Encouraged by his approbation, Rev. James Bryce, the first Chaplain of the Church of Scotland in Calcutta, presented a petition to the General Assembly in Scotland directing "the attention of the Church of Scotland to British India as a field for missionary exertions." Rammohun Roy, who used to regularly attend the services at St. Andrew's Church—the Scotch Kirk of Calcutta—supported this memorial in a separate communication. He felt happy, he wrote, to have an opportunity of expressing his opinion, "that if the prayer of the memorial is complied with, there is a fair and reasonable prospect of this measure proving conducive to the diffusion of religious and moral knowledge in India." It was in response to this appeal that the Rev. Alexander Duff, the pioneer of Christian Educational Missions to India, was sent over by the Church of Scotland in 1830. The young missionary received a most cordial welcome from Rammohun Roy on his arrival in Calcutta. And how greatly Dr. Duff was helped by Rammohun is told by Dr. George Smith in his biography of the distinguished Scotch Missionary.

"In a pleasant garden house in the leafy suburbs of Calcutta," writes Dr. Smith, "the Raja Rammohun Roy, then 56 years of age, was spending his declining days in meditation on divine truth, broken only by works of practical benevolence among his countrymen, and soon by preparations for a visit to England . . . 'You must at once visit the Raja,' said General Beatson, when Mr. Duff presented his letter of introduction, 'and I will drive you out on an early evening. . . .' Having listened to the young Scotman's statement of his objects and plans, Rammohun Roy expressed general approval. All true education, the reformer emphatically declared, ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information, but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions, and the workings of the conscience. . . .

"Greatly cheered by the emphatic concurrence of Rammohun Roy, Mr. Duff said the real difficulty now was, where, or how, to get a hall in the native city in which to commence operations ; for the natives owing to caste prejudices, were absolutely averse to letting any of their houses to a European for European purposes. Then, if a suitable place could be got, how could youths of respectable classes be induced to attend, since he was resolved to teach the Bible in every class, and he was told that this would constitute an insuperable objection. . . . Rammohun Roy at once offered the small hall of the Brumho Sobha, in the Chitpore Road, for which he had been paying to the five Brahman owners five pounds a month of rental. The few worshippers were about to use a new building which he had himself erected. . . . As to pupils, his personal friends were sufficiently free from prejudice to send

their sons at his request. Driving at once to the spot, the generous Hindoo reformer secured the hall for the Christian missionary from Scotland at four pounds a month. Pointing to a *punkha* suspended from the roof, Rammohun said with a smile, 'I leave you that as a legacy'. . .

"After a few days," proceeds the story, "five bright-eyed youths of the higher class, mostly Brahmanical, called upon Mr. Duff with a note of introduction from Rammohun Roy, stating that those five, with the full consent of their friends, were ready to attend him whenever he might open the School." On the date of the opening of the School (13th July, 1830), "Rammohun Roy was present to explain difficulties, and especially to remove the prejudice against reading the Bible. . . He told his young countrymen that they were mistaken. 'Christians, like Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson, have studied the Hindu Sastras, and you know that he has not become a Hindu. I myself have read all the Koran again and again, and has that made me a Mussalman? Nay, I have studied the whole Bible, and you know I am not a Christian. Why, then, do you fear to read it? Read it and judge for yourselves. Not compulsion, but enlightened persuasion, which you may resist if you choose, constitutes you yourselves judges of the contents of the book'. Most of the remonstrants seemed satisfied. . . . Daily for the next month did the Hindoo reformer visit the school at ten for the Bible lesson, and frequently thereafter till he left for England, when his eldest son [Radhaprasad Roy] continued to encourage the boys by his presence and their teacher by his kindly counsel. But all the Christian missionaries kept aloof. . . ."

(34—37) Some Newspapers of Rammohun and his time:

(1) *Samachar Darpan*:—The *Samachar Darpan*, or the "Mirror of News," was started by the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore on the 23rd May, 1818, under the editorship of Dr. J. C. Marshman. The *Darpan* contained news, both foreign and Indian. From the 11th July, 1829 English columns running parallel to their Bengali version were added to it, making it bi-lingual. The *Samachar Darpan* continued to run for a long time. It temporarily disappeared from the field on 25th December, 1841, on Dr. Marshman being appointed editor of the weekly *Government Gazette*. It was, however, revived (January, 1842) by one Bhagabati Charan Chatterjee, "in whose hands it soon dropped or died." The Serampore Mission again revived it in 1851 (3rd May) but discontinued it soon after (November, 1852). [For a fuller account of the *Samachar Darpan*, readers may refer to Brajendra Nath Banerji's *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Part 1, Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, which contains extracts taken entirely from the paper.]

(2) *Sambad Kaumudi*:—The *Sambad Kaumudi*, or the "Moon of Intelligence," made its first appearance on the 4th December, 1821. It was a weekly paper published every Tuesday morning. The object of the journal, as described in the first number, was "public good. The subjects to be discussed will, therefore, have that object as a *guiding star*, and any essay bearing upon the primary object will always meet

with ready attention." Rammohun was not only the principal promoter but the *de facto* editor of this periodical, and articles from his pen were frequently published in it. Bhawani Charan Banerji was on the editorial staff of the *Kaumudi* upto its 13th issue, after which he set up a rival paper, the *Samachar Chandrika*, with the object of counteracting the agitation set on foot by Rammohun Roy against the "Suttee." The *Sambad Kaumudi* was practically the first Bengali newspaper edited and conducted by Bengalis, though a short-lived paper. Gangadhar Bhattacharyya's *Bangla Gazette* (1816), had preceded it. The *Sambad Kaumudi* lost many subscribers when its rival, the *Samachar Chandrika*, was published, Bhawani Charan Banerji, its founder, "luring them away" by an "artifice." In fact, the *Kaumudi* had soon to close its career (September, 1822) for want of support but was again revived in April, 1823 under the editorship of Ananda Chandra Mookerji. It became a bi-weekly in 1830. [For a complete and accurate account of the papers started by Rammohun, readers are referred to the three articles by Brajendra Nath Banerji on "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" in the *Modern Review* for April, May and August, 1931.]

(3) *Samachar Chandrika* :—The *Samachar Chandrika*, which, under the editorship of Bhawani Charan Banerji, referred to above, became the organ of the orthodox Hindu Community, as represented by Dharma Sabha, was started on the 5th March, 1822. It used to appear every Monday containing "miscellaneous information about various countries." The *Chandrika* became a bi-weekly in April, 1829 and later became finally amalgamated with the *Dainik*, published from the Bangabasi office. Copious extracts from the *Chandrika* have been published in the second part of Brajendra Nath Banerji's *Sangbad Patre Sakaler Katha* (published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad.)

(4) *Miral-ul-Akhbar* :—The *Miral-ul-Akhbar*, or the "Mirror of News," the first Persian weekly journal published in Calcutta, was founded by Rammohun Roy. It first made its appearance from Dhurrumtollah on the 12th April, 1822. The Persian editorials of *Miral-ul-Akhbar* were mostly written by Rammohun, and English translations of several of them are found in the columns of James Silk Buckingham's *Calcutta Journal*. These editorials are of inestimable value, as revealing Rammohun's deep learning and his thoughts on the current political questions of his time. Certain observations by Rammohun on the doctrine of the Trinity, published in the *Miral* in June 4, 1822, were considered "exceedingly offensive" by the authorities, as would appear from the Minute recorded on the 10th October, 1822, by Mr. W. F. Bayley of the Supreme Council, regarding the tendency of "the native Press." Some extracts from this Minute reproduced below will give an idea as to Rammohun's "offence."

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Dr. Middleton, the late Bishop of Calcutta. After some laudatory remarks on his learning and dignity, the article concludes by stating that the Bishop, having been now relieved from the care and anxieties of this world, had 'tumbled on the shoulders of the mercy of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.'

"The expression coming from a known impugner of the doctrine of the Trinity, could only be considered as ironical, and was noticed in one of the other papers as objectionable and offensive. It might have been sufficient for the editor of the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* on finding that he had given offence to have expressed his regret, to have disclaimed all such intention, and thus to let the subject drop. But this course was not suited to the polemic disposition of the Editor. In the paper of the 19th July he enters into a long justification of his obituary notice, and, affectedly misunderstanding the real purport of the objection taken to his introduction of the mention of (the) Trinity, he makes use of observations, which, in my mind, constitute an aggravation of the offence. He says, 'with respect to what was said of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, since the Preachers of the Christian religion, constantly, in every Church, throughout the year, read their articles of faith with a loud voice, not regarding the presence of either Hindu or Musalman, and declare their conviction that salvation is to be found only in the belief of the Three in One, what doubt can there be then, that they believe in the Three whom I have mentioned.' And, again, 'But since it seems that the mere mention in the Persian language of the essential principles of the Christian religion is an aspersion on the faith professed by the Governor-General and all its followers, I shall, therefore, avoid this fault in future.'

"In the paper of the 9th August, the discussion is revived and the objections are treated in the same style.

"It is asked 'if any one in inditing an obituary notice of a Hindu should mention the Ganges or other object of worship of that nation, would the Hindus take offence,' and, afterwards, the Editor quotes a verse, which he ascribes to some Persian poet, meaning as follows:—'Whose-ever religion is such that the mere mention of the God of it, is a cause of shame, we may readily guess what kind of a religion that is, and what sort of a people are its professors!'" [*The Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

Shortly after this, Mr. Adam, the then Governor-General (Acting), promulgated the new Press Ordinance severely restricting the liberty of the Press. Immediately following the registration of these regulations by the Supreme Court, Rammohun Roy closed down the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* as a protest. In the last number of his paper he "declared his inability to go on publishing under, what he would represent as to him degrading conditions, and he laments that he, 'one of the most humble of men,' should be no longer able to contribute towards the intellectual improvement of his countrymen." [See the articles on "An Unknown Chapter of the Calcutta Press" and the "Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta" by Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, 1st September, 1928 and the Sixth Anniversary Number, 22nd November, 1930 respectively; also the third instalment of the article, "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" in the *Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

(5) *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa*:—The *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa*, which commenced publication on 8th March, 1822, was a weekly, written in Hindustani. From its 8th number (16th May, 1822) it became a polyglot, being written



both in Hindustani and Persian. The paper was the property of and principally conducted by an English mercantile house in Calcutta. Its scope and object were declared to be "the promulgation of articles on news from the English papers etc., the procuring and making known of intelligence of all that passed in the principal cities of Hindusthan whether within the Company's territories or outside."

(6) *Banga-dut* :—Rammohun was also associated as one of the proprietors, with the *Bengal Herald* or *Weekly Messenger*, started on the 10th May, 1829. This was published in four languages (English, Bengali, Persian, and Nagri) and edited by R. Montgomery Martin. Besides Rammohun, the other proprietors of the paper were Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Nilratan Haldar of Chitpore, and Rajkissen Singh. Very soon, however, Rammohun found it necessary to sever his connection with this journal.

### (38—39) The Press Ordinance of 1823:

Lord Wellesley was the first to fetter the freedom of the Indian Press by creating, on the 13th May, 1799, a censorship, which demanded the submission of the proof-sheets of all newspapers before their publication to the Chief Secretary to the Government for inspection. Lord Minto was no less vigilant over the Press, and more stringent rules were imposed by him on the editors.

Lord Minto was succeeded by the Marquis of Hastings, who, by orders dated 19th August, 1818, released the editors from the obligation hitherto imposed on them of submitting their manuscript articles—even advertisements—to an officer of Government previous to publication, and only laid down for their guidance some general rules calculated to prevent the discussion of topics, which might affect the authority of the Government or injure public interests. The real intention of Lord Hastings and the policy of his Government towards the Press have, however, been misunderstood. It was this. Under the censorship imposed by Lord Wellesley on newspapers published by Europeans, the punishment sanctioned for any breach of the regulation was the immediate deportation of the offending editor to Europe by cancelling his licence, which entitled him to reside in India. By the year 1818 Indian and Eurasian edited newspapers had come into being at Calcutta, and as Eurasians and Indians could not be deported to England, the absence of any legal method of punishing editors of these two races was now felt for the first time. The Government made itself ridiculous by punishing European editors, while it could not touch Indian and European offenders of the same class and it was, therefore that Lord Hastings' Government decided to abolish the [Wellesley] censorship.

The Press in Bengal enjoyed even this freedom for a very short time only. Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal* (founded on 2nd October, 1818) published articles, which the Government thought to be of an offensive and mischievous character, and, therefore, a violation of the rules issued by Lord Hastings. Minutes were recorded by members of the Supreme Council suggesting the necessity of checking the excesses of the Press. On

the 10th October, 1822, Mr. W. B. Bayley delivered in the Calcutta Council a lengthy minute regarding the tendency of the native Press. This State-paper tells us about the "objectionable" nature of some of the articles published in the vernacular Press, particularly in the *Miral-ul-Akhbar*, the Persian Weekly of Raja Rammohun Roy.

When abolishing the censorship in August, 1818, Government had decided to point out to the Court of Directors the inadequacy of the existing Press Law, but no such official representation was actually made for four years. On the 17th October, 1822, Lord Hastings' Government wrote to the Home authorities asking for power to enable the Indian Government to exercise a more efficient and decided control over the Press than it then had the power of exerting.

Lord Hastings sailed away for England on 9th January, 1823, and was succeeded temporarily by a subordinate official, J. Adam, whose first act was to deport Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal* for the offence of his 'disrespectful expression' in an article criticising the acceptance by Dr. Bryce, the Head Minister of new Scotch Church, the post of Clerk of the Stationery under the East India Company and observing directly as well as indirectly that it was unbecoming of the character of the minister to accept a situation like this. Mr. Buckingham was ordered, on the 12th February, 1823, that he should leave India for England within the period of two months from the date of the receipt of the order. The *Journal* was suppressed and Mr. Sandford Arnot, Mr. Buckingham's Assistant Editor,—who later became Rammohun's Private Secretary in England,—was arrested and put on board a ship bound for the British Isles. And to crown all this, the Acting Governor-General passed, on the 14th March, 1823, a rigorous Press Ordinance. Under this new measure the proprietors and editors of newspapers in the Presidency were required to take out licenses, for which they had to forward to the Chief Secretary to the Government an affidavit specifying certain particulars. For the offence of discussing any of the subjects prohibited by law, an editor was liable to lose the license under which his paper was conducted.

The law in India as it then stood required that every new legislative measure, before it was finally placed on the Statute Book, must be registered by the Supreme Court. The new Press ordinance was accordingly entered in the Court on the 15th March, 1823, and, on the 17th the Court was moved to allow parties feeling themselves aggrieved by the new regulation to be heard. Sir Francis Macnaghten, the Sole Acting Judge, in fixing the date for the hearing of objections suggested that the objectors, foremost among whom was Rammohun, should state their objections in a memorial to Government. Accordingly, five distinguished citizens of Calcutta,—Chunder Coomar Tagore, Dwarka Nath Tagore, Hurchunder Bose, Gowree Churn Banerjee and Prossunno Coomar Tagore—led by Rammohun, submitted a memorable memorial which Miss Collet describes as the "*Areopagitica* of Indian history." The Supreme Court dismissed the memorial, Sir Francis Macnaghten scandalising the memorialists by announcing that before the Ordinance was entered or

its merits argued in Court, he had pledged himself to Government to give it his sanction.

As a protest against this, the Raja, we have already seen, discontinued the publication of his Persian weekly. The reasons for this discontinuance, he gave in a most remarkable editorial in the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*. It ran thus :—

"It was previously intimated, that a Rule and Ordinance was promulgated by His Excellency the Honourable the Governor-General in Council, enacting, that a Daily, Weekly or any Periodical Paper should not be published in this City, without an Affidavit being made by its Proprietor in the Police Office, and without a License being procured for such publication from the Chief Secretary to Government; and that after such License being obtained, it is optional with the Governor-General to recall the same, whenever His Excellency may be dissatisfied with any part of the Paper. Be it known, that on the 31st of March, the Honourable Sir Francis Macnaghten, Judge of the Supreme Court, expressed his approbation of the Rule and Ordinance so passed. Under these circumstances, I, the least of all the human race, in consideration of several difficulties, have, with much regret and reluctance, relinquished the publication of this Paper (*Mirat-ool-Akhbar*). The difficulties are these :—

"*First*.—Although it is very easy for those European Gentlemen, who have the honour to be acquainted with the Chief Secretary to Government, to obtain a License according to the prescribed form; yet to a humble individual like myself, it is very hard to make his way through the porters and attendants of a great Personage; or to enter the doors of the Police Court, crowded with people of all classes, for the purpose of obtaining what is in fact, already (unnecessary ?) in my opinion. [Here follows a Persian couplet.]

"*Secondly*.—To make Affidavit voluntarily in an open Court, in presence of respectable Magistrates, is looked upon as very mean and censurable by those who watch the conduct of their neighbours. Besides, the publication of a newspaper is not incumbent upon every person, so that he must resort to the evasion of establishing fictitious Proprietors, which is contrary to Law, and repugnant to Conscience.

"*Thirdly*.—After incurring the disrepute of solicitation and suffering the dishonour of making Affidavit, the constant apprehension of the License being recalled by Government which would disgrace the person in the eyes of the world, must create such anxiety as entirely to destroy his peace of mind, because a man, by nature liable to err, in telling the real truth cannot help sometimes making use of words and selecting phrases that might be unpleasant to Government. I, however, here prefer silence to speaking out. [Here follows another Persian couplet, from Hafiz.]

"I now entreat those kind and liberal gentlemen of Persia and Hindoosthan, who have honoured the *Mirat-ool-Ukhbar* with their patronage, that, in consideration of the reasons above stated, they will excuse the non-fulfilment of my promise to make them acquainted with passing events, as stated in the introductory remarks in the first number; and I earnestly hope from their liberality, that wherever and however I may be situated they will always consider me, the humblest of the human race, as devoted to their service." [From the *Calcutta Journal* of James Silk Buckingham, dated April 10, 1823, cited by Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

Baffled in his attempt to see the restoration of a free Press to India, Rammohun next appealed to the King in Council,—an appeal which, as Miss Collet describes, "is one of the noblest pieces of English to which

Rammohun put his hand." This petition, after six months' consideration, was rejected by the Privy Council in November, 1825.

Rammohun did not live to see the restoration of the freedom of the Indian Press by Sir Charles Metcalfe. But his fight for a liberated Press was not, however, forgotten. We read that in the "Free Press Dinner" given to Sir Charles Metcalfe at the Calcutta Town Hall on the 9th February, 1838, a toast was proposed by an Englishman, Mr. Leith, to "the memory of Rammohun Roy," which was seconded by Prasanna Kumar Tagore "as a friend of the late Rammohun Roy."

### (40) The Delhi Embassy:

In 1828 Rammohun Roy was approached by the Calcutta Agent to the then titular Emperor of Delhi, Abu-nasar Muin-ud-din Akbar (Akbar II), with a view to representing his grievances, mainly regarding the inadequate stipends granted to him by the East India Company, to the King of Great Britain. Rammohun signified his consent, and he was asked by the Emperor to draw up a draft appeal both in Persian and English. This Rammohun did in a most well-reasoned document, unearthed some years ago by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, which ought to find a permanent place amongst the writings of Rammohun alike for its grace, vigour and clearness of style. The concluding paragraph of this remarkable appeal, reproduced below, will give some idea of the character and form of this memorable memorial.

"If I had any doubt of the justice of my claims, I might still rest them on an appeal to your Majesty's known generosity. I might remind your Majesty of the time when my ancestors ruled supreme over these countries, where their wretched descendant and the sole representative of their dynasty is compelled to drag on a dependent existence in a dilapidated palace, exposed to the contempt or receiving the sympathy of the different classes of society, both Europeans and Asiatics, who resort to Delhi, with means utterly inadequate to support the dignity even of a nominal sovereignty or to afford a scanty subsistence to the numerous branches of his family who look to him as their only stay. But I will not resort to such a plea. I will not condescend to accept, and your Majesty will disdain to confer, as a favour, that which is due as a right. I rest my cause on your Majesty's high-minded sense of honour and justice. I cannot permit myself to suppose that your Majesty will lend a deaf ear to my complaints. I address by this letter not only your Majesty but the world at large, and I anticipate the plaudits which present and future ages will bestow on your Majesty's benevolent and enlightened sympathy with the unworthy representative of the once great and illustrious, though now fallen, House of Taimur.

"To your Majesty what need I say more?"

Rammohun wanted to have from the East India Company copies of some official letters and documents, which should accompany the representation in question, but, in spite of repeated attempts on his part and that of the Emperor of Delhi, he failed to do so. The Government was reluctant from the very beginning to recognize Rammohun as an Agent of Delhi and enquired of the Emperor whether he acknowledged Rammohun

Roy as such and "the bearer of a letter of complaint to our Gracious Sovereign King George IV." On the Emperor definitely acknowledging Rammohun as his Agent, the Governor-General submitted to the Court of Directors a copy of his petition in the name of the Emperor of Delhi.

Meanwhile the Emperor of Delhi had invested Rammohun with the title of Raja, "in consideration of the respectability attaching to his office" as the *Elchi* (Envoy) from the Court of Delhi to the Court of Great Britain, and graciously forwarded to him a Seal of Office, engraved specially for the purpose. On the 8th January, 1830, Rammohun informed the Governor-General in Council of the title conferred upon him by the Emperor and asked his sanction to his (Rammohun's) adoption of the title. Promptly the Government replied that they could neither recognize Rammohun's appointment as Envoy on the part of the Emperor of Delhi to the Court of Great Britain nor acquiesce in His Majesty's grant of the title to him on the occasion of that appointment. On September 29, 1830, Rammohun represented to the Governor-General that, upon various considerations, he had decided to proceed to England as a "private individual," divesting himself of all public character.

Shortly after reaching England Rammohun delivered to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, and circulated before influential personages, a printed statement on the subject of the claims of the Emperor of Delhi, corresponding in substance to the letter from the Emperor to King George IV of England, already referred to. As a result of the exertions of Rammohun, the Court of Directors, on the 13th February, 1833, sanctioned, under certain conditions, an addition of 3 lakhs of rupees per annum to the annual stipend of 12 lakhs to the Emperor of Delhi. This decision of the Court of Directors being conveyed by the Governor-General to the Emperor on the 12th July, 1833, the latter declined to accept the conditions proposed until he had received information from Raja Rammohun Roy, the "Royal Agent then in England." The unfortunate death of Rammohun, however, dashed all the hopes of the Emperor to the ground, and he accepted the increase of his stipend with the conditions imposed. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's monograph, "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England," Chapter I.]

It is interesting to note in this connection that the Raja received from the Emperor Rs. 70,000 as his Envoy to England [*Samachar Darpan*, 5th June, 1833, cited by B. N. Banerji in the *Indian Messenger*, December 13, 1931, p. 584]. The Emperor also agreed that if the Raja could, by his exertions on his behalf in England, secure for him an increase of Rupees eight lakhs to his annuity, he would be paid, as a reward, half the amount of a year's increase, *i.e.*, Rupees four lakhs, and a monthly allowance of Rs. 5,000. If, however, the annuity was less, he was to be paid a remuneration and a monthly allowance, *pro-rata* with the amount of increase. Conformably with these engagements, the Emperor wanted to settle on Rammohun's sons, Radha prasad and Rama Prasad, after their father's death, a monthly allowance of Rs. 1,875. Accordingly he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces informing him as to how he

intended to distribute his increased stipend, mentioning, among other items, the proposed allowance to Rammohun's sons. The Lieutenant-Governor not having approved of the proposed distribution, the Emperor, as a last measure, wrote (April, 1837) to the Governor-General, Lord Auckland. The passages from the Emperor's letter given below will speak for themselves :—

"It cost me three lakhs of Rupees to send ambassadors to England and Calcutta for the sole purpose of removing my own embarrassments and those of my children, brothers and sisters and salateens . . . . . Rajah Rammohun Roy Bahadur, confiding in my promises and favour, undertook the distant journey to England and fell a sacrifice . . . . . The fulfilment of my promise is just and proper, and independently of my promise, and without reference to the increase, the family of a man who has sacrificed his life in the service of his master, ought to be maintained by that master—especially Rao Radha Prasad and Rao Ramaprasad, sons of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, who are my devoted servants, and have likewise received a promise of remuneration. Moreover, for the space of two years past, Rao Radhaprasad has been in attendance at the Royal threshold, in the hope of realizing the promised remuneration and salary on account of his father's devotion . . . . . The payment of debt by every Law is a duty, and the fulfilment of my promises of remuneration and fixed salaries to the sons of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy . . . . . is as much incumbent on me, if not more so, than the discharge of a just debt. It was solely from an anxiety to liquidate my debts and redeem my promises, that a *Razinama* for so small an increase was executed. . . . . Justice requires, that your Lordship should make a suitable arrangement for the expenses of royalty and for the satisfaction of the rights of Rajah Rammohun Roy . . . . . [Translated from Persian.]

The Emperor's representation had no effect. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article on "Rammohun Roy's Engagements with the Emperor of Delhi," the *Modern Review* for January, 1930.]

#### (41) Objects of Rammohun's Visit to England:

One of the three objects of Rammohun's visit to England, that of representing the grievances of the Emperor of Delhi to the King of England, has been discussed in the previous 'Note.' The other two objects were: (i) to be present at the approaching discussion of the House of Commons at the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, upon which the future Government of India, whether for good or for evil, so largely depended; (ii) to present memorials in favour of the abolition of the *Suttee* which he carried with him from India, and to counteract the agitation carried on there by the powerful orthodox leaders of the Hindu community.

#### (42—44) Arrival in England: Meeting with William Roscoe: Jeremy Bentham:

Raja Rammohun Roy sailed from Calcutta on the 15th November, 1830, on board the *Albion*, bound for Liverpool. His party consisted of his adopted son, Raja Ram; his cook, Ramroten Mukerjee; and his personal attendant, Ramhurry Doss. The Raja reached England on the

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8th April, 1831, after a voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. No sooner was the arrival of the Raja known in Liverpool than almost every man of distinction in the town hastened to call upon him. One of the very first visits he received was from the sons of the celebrated William Roscoe, the historian of the Medicis, who was then practically on his death-bed. He had not, owing to his paralytic condition, received any visitors for years. He had, however, sent his sons with an earnest request to Rammohun to see him. Roscoe received Rammohun in his sick chamber, and after a most affecting interview—at which except the two great men one of Roscoe's sons was present, and he had left an impression of the memorable meeting—the Raja came out of the room "with agitated countenance and moistened eyes." Roscoe's son writes: "The interview will never be forgotten . . . After the usual gesture of Eastern salutation, Rammohun said: 'Happy and proud am I, proud and happy, to behold a man whose fame has extended not only over Europe but over every part of the world.' 'I bless God,' replied Mr. Roscoe, 'that I have been permitted to live to see this day.' Their conversation chiefly turned upon the objects which had led Rammohun Roy to this country, and in the course of it he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the political and commercial state of England." Roscoe died shortly after.

From Liverpool the Raja hastened to London to be present in the House of Commons on the Second Reading of the Reform Bill. Roscoe had armed him with a letter of introduction to Lord Brougham, a Minister of the Crown, requesting him that he should "obtain for our distinguished visitor the benefit of a seat under the Gallery of the House of Commons, on the debate on the third reading of the Reform Bill. On his way from Liverpool to London Rammohun broke his journey at Manchester. James Sutherland, who accompanied Rammohun to England, in a very interesting account of the Raja's voyage to and subsequent travels in England, published in the *India Gazette* of 1834, writes that, when the Raja visited the great factories all the workmen struck work, "and men, women and children rushed in crowds to see '*the King of Ingee!*' Many of the great unwashed insisted upon shaking hands with him; some of the ladies, who had not stayed to make their toilets very carefully, wished to embrace him, and he with difficulty escaped . . . The aid of the police was required to make way for him to the manufactories, and when he entered, it was necessary to close and bolt the gate to keep out the mob."

The Raja reached London late in the evening and being dissatisfied with the rooms assigned to him in "a filthy inn" in the Newgate Street, ordered a coach and set off to the Adelphi Hotel, which he reached about 10 o'clock. Long after he had retired to bed, the venerable British Philosopher, Jeremy Bentham, who had not for many years called on any one or left his house, came to the Hotel to see Rammohun, and left a characteristic note for him—"Jeremy Bentham to his friend Rammohun Roy." They afterwards met each other and Bentham came to be so attached to him that he addressed him as his "intensely-admired and dearly-beloved collaborator in the service of mankind"

and advocated his return to Parliament. From the Adelphi Hotel Rammohun shifted to a big mansion at 125 Regent Street, where "for some months he held court as real, if informal, ambassador for the people of India." James Sutherland, to whom we have referred before, and who later became Principal of the Hooghly College, writes: . "As soon as it was known in London that the great Brahman Philosopher had arrived, the most distinguished men in the country crowded to pay their respects to him; and he had scarcely got into his lodgings in Regent Street, when his door was besieged with carriages from eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon; until this constant state of excitement (for he caught the tone of the day and vehemently discussed politics with every one) actually made him ill . . . when his physicians gave positive orders to his footman not to admit visitors." Rammohun was introduced into the House of Lords by the King's brother, the Duke of Cumberland, and, we are told by Miss Collet, that it was the Raja's urgent solicitations which prevented the Tory Peers voting against the Indian Jury Bill. Though many of the proud Lords wanted only to lionize him, yet there were not a few who sought his company with a view to acquiring information regarding India. With Lord Brougham, the great advocate of popular education and of the abolition of slavery, Rammohun lived on terms of the closest intimacy. He spent a day with the Duke of Sussex, the King's brother, who was much attached to him, and was often a guest of the Duke of Devonshire with whom he was frequently seen in London theatres. The Earl of Munster, whom Rammohun had previously met in India, was another devoted friend of the Raja, who also made friends with Sir Henry Strachey and Sir Charles Forbes.

But how was the Raja received in London by the man in the street? The answer is furnished by a passage we find in a Parliamentary blue-book. There we are told that "when Rammohun Roy made his first appearance in the streets of London, he was greeted with the cry of 'Tippoo,' the mob apparently thinking that all who wore 'the shadowed livery of the burnished sun' were equally entitled to that name!"

#### (45—47) Reception and Honours in England:

The fame of Raja Rammohun Roy had, as we have already seen, preceded him in England, and his arrival there, as has been recorded in the previous 'Note,' caused no little stir. The eminent position he occupied in his own country and the esteem in which he was held as a reformer and scholar, brought upon him honours from all quarters. Several receptions were held in his honour in London, the first of which was at the British Unitarian Association. A full record of this most interesting occasion is happily preserved in the *Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature* of June, 1831 (Vol. V; N.S., pp. 417-420), and we quote from it. Dr. Bowring (afterwards Sir John Bowring), the biographer of Jeremy Bentham and editor of his works, in welcoming the Raja, said:—

"I am sure that it is impossible to give expression to those sentiments of interest and anticipation with which his advent here is associated in all our minds. I recollect some writers have indul-



ged themselves with enquiring what they should feel if any of those time-honoured men whose names have lived through the vicissitudes of ages, should appear among them. They have endeavoured to imagine what would be their sensations if a Plato or a Socrates, a Milton or a Newton, were unexpectedly to honour them with their presence. I recollect that a Poet, who has well been called divine, has drawn a beautiful picture of the feelings of those who first visited the southern hemisphere, and saw, for the first time, that beautiful constellation, the Golden Cross. It was with feeling such as they underwent, that I was overwhelmed when I stretched out in your name the hand of welcome to the Raja Rammohun Roy. In my mind the effect of distance is very like the effect of time; and he who comes among us from a country thousands of miles off, must be looked upon with same interest as those illustrious men who lived thousands of years ago."

Dr. Kireland, ex-President of the Harvard University, U. S. A., who followed Dr. Bowring, said: "The Raja was an object of lively interest in America", and he was "expected there with the greatest anxiety." The Rev. W. G. Fox, friend and patron of Robert Browning, whose youthful Muse he was at this very time sedulously encouraging, joined in the tribute, and the proceedings were brought to a close by the Raja making a short but beautiful speech, concluding with the following observations: "There is a battle going on between Reason, scriptures and common sense and wealth, power and prejudice. These three have been struggling with the other three; but I am convinced that your success, sooner or later, is certain . . . The honour that you have from time to time conferred upon me . . ., I shall never forget to the last moment of my existence."

The Directors of the East India Company, though they refused to recognize Rammohun as the Envoy of the Emperor of Delhi and the title conferred upon him by the Padishah, entertained the Raja, on the 6th July, 1831, at a dinner at the City of London Tavern. Eighty covers were laid, and it was "quite a State affair." The Chairman of the Company presided and proposed the health of Rammohun in a felicitous speech, complimenting him on "the vast services he had rendered to the Indian Community." "Like the bee, which suck the choicest sweets from the flowers of the garden," he said, "the Brahman collected from the boundless stores of knowledge, to which from travel and study he had access, the richest intellectual treasures." The Raja in his reply, referred to the "security for property or for life" enjoyed by India under the administration of the East India Company, and paid a tribute to "Lord William Bentinck, who had laid aside everything like show or ostentation, and exhibited no symptom of arbitrary authority, but, on the contrary, had done all in his power to gain the good opinions of the Natives of India, and so raised them in the scale of Nations." An account of this dinner published in the *Asiatic Journal* (August, 1831, pp. 236-37) from which we have quoted, says: "It was rather curious to see the Brahman surrounded by hearty feeders upon turtle and venison and champagne, and touching nothing himself but rice and cold water." [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England," Chapter II].

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

The Government in England recognized both the embassy and the title of the Raja, for we find recorded in the *Court Circular* that "at the levee held at the Palace, St. James's, on the 7th September [1831], the Rajah Rammohun Roy was introduced to an audience of the King [William IV] by the Right Hon. Charles Grant, the President of the Board of Control, and was most graciously received. The Rajah wore the costume of a Brahman, viz., the turban and kabah. The latter was composed of purple velvet, embroidered in gold."

At the Coronation of William IV, the distinguished visitor from India had a seat assigned to him among the ambassadors of the Crowned Heads of Europe. On the occasion of the opening of the London Bridge, he was invited by His Majesty to the banquet given in celebration of the event. Invited by the Royal Asiatic Society of London, Rammohun took part at its annual meeting, moving a vote of thanks to Henry Thomas Colebrooke, the great Orientalist.

Rammohun was by this time, "a fully fledged member of the highest circles of English Society." He had shifted from his house at Regent Street to "a most magnificent abode" in Cumberland Terrace, Regent's Park. Miss Collet writes: "His gracious manners and his especial deference to women greatly ingratiated him with the fair sex, several of whom have left on record warmly appreciative reminiscences." One of them writes: "I often met him (the Raja) in London . . . at large parties and even Balls, where he would converse on subjects that seemed rather unsuitable to the place,—the Trinity and other sacred things which were occupying his own thoughts." In the diary of the celebrated actress, Fanny Kemble, we find the following entry under date December 22, 1831: "In the evening the play was *Isabella*; the house very bad; I played very well. The Rajah Rammohun Roy was in the Duke of Devonshire's box, and went into fits of crying, poor man!" Rightly Miss Collet adds, that "this is a fact in a many-sided character which we are glad to have preserved. It is pleasant to know that the great Reformer was not above tears, even over a well-acted play."

Among other celebrities whom Rammohun met in England was Robert Owen, the father of British Socialism. Owen, we are told, did his best to convert Rammohun to his own views, but without success.

### (48) The Raja and the Reform Bill:

When Rammohun Roy reached England the country was in the vortex of the agitation over the Reform Bill. The Raja, as we have already seen in the letter of introduction that William Roscoe gave him to Lord Brougham, was vitally interested in the measure. The first Bill introduced by Lord John Russel (March 1, 1831) was defeated in Committee when Rammohun was nearing England. The defeat was followed by an immediate dissolution of Parliament. The second Bill was passed by the new House of Commons on the 22nd September but was rejected by the Lords on the 8th October. England was convulsed in an agitation the like of which she had not seen for many years. It appeared as if there would be civil war. A fresh measure, the Third Reform Bill, was put before the House of Commons again, and, once

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again, the Lower House, after having passed it (March, 1832) sent to the Lords. The nation awaited the decision of the Upper House "in a wild fever of excitement." Miss Collet writes : "Rammohun shared in the general agony of suspense. He felt that it was no mere British business, but that it vitally affected the fortunes of mankind." He postponed his visit to Bristol, "impatiently waiting in London to know the result of the Bill," as he himself wrote in a letter to a friend (Miss Kiddell of Bristol). The Peers at last yielded, and the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords was carried in April by nine votes. The Raja was elated. In a characteristic letter to another friend (Mrs. Woodford) he wrote : "The struggles are not merely between the Reformers and anti-Reformers, but between liberty and oppression throughout the world; between justice and injustice; and between right and wrong. But . . . we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily gaining ground, notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots."

The Lords finally passed the Reform Bill in June, which was followed by similar measures for Ireland and Scotland. The Raja's delight knew no bounds. "I am now happy" . . . , he wrote to his friend Mr. William Rathbone, "on the complete success of the Reform Bills, notwithstanding the violent opposition and want of political principle on the part of the aristocrats. The nation can no longer be a prey of the few who used to fill their purses at the expense, nay, to the ruin of the people, for a period of upwards of fifty years." The Raja concluded this remarkable letter with the following observations : "As I publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, I would renounce my connection with this country, I refrained from writing to you or any other friend in Liverpool until I knew the result. Thank Heaven, I can now feel proud of being one of your fellow subjects, and heartily rejoice that I have the infinite happiness of witnessing the salvation of the nation, nay, of the whole world."

Does not the letter remind us of the determination of Oliver Cromwell to set sail for America in case of defeat of the Grand Remonstrance in the Long Parliament?

### (49) Visit to France:

The name of the Raja had been known to the cultured circles of France as early as 1818. D'Acosta, the editor of the *Calcutta Times*, had transmitted to the Abbe Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, some of the publications of Rammohun with an account of his life; and through the Bishop, Rammohun, we are told by Miss Mary Carpenter, became extensively known and highly appreciated in France. In a pamphlet that the Abbe Gregoire wrote on Rammohun, he paid a singular tribute to his activities. "The moderation," wrote the Bishop, "with which he (Rammohun) repels the attacks on his writings, the force of his arguments, and his profound knowledge of the sacred books of the Hindoos, are proofs of his fitness for the work he has undertaken; and the pecuniary sacrifices he has made; show a disinterestedness which cannot be

encouraged or admired too warmly." The celebrated Sismondi, in an article in the *Revue Encyclopédique* (Paris) for 1824, after some observations respecting the Hindu institution of castes and the practice of *Suttee*, wrote thus: "A glorious reform has, however, begun to spread among the Hindoos. A Brahmin, whom those who know India agree in representing as one of the most virtuous and enlightened of men, Rammohun Roy, is exerting himself to restore his countrymen to the worship of the true God, and to the union of morality and religion. His flock is small, but increases continually. He communicates to the Hindoos all the progress that thought has made among the Europeans." Shortly after this, the Société Asiatique of Paris forwarded to Rammohun a Diploma of Honorary Membership of that learned and scientific body, "long before such honorable notice had begun to be taken of him either in India or in England."

Rammohun had long cherished hopes of visiting France,—“a country so favoured by nature and so richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and above all, blessed by the possession of a free constitution,” as he himself described it. Towards the end of 1831 he made his final preparations for the visit to France. But to his chagrin, writes Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, he was informed that for a foreign visitor it was necessary first to obtain a passport from the French Ambassador in London, who, before granting it, must be furnished with an account of the applicant. Rammohun was not prepared to be confronted with such restrictions. He protested. “Such restrictions against foreigners,” he pointed out, “are not observed even among the nations of Asia,” and he was, therefore, “quite at a loss to conceive how it should exist among a people so famed as the French are for courtesy and liberality in all other matters.” The Raja wrote a most remarkable letter in this connection to the Foreign Minister of France in which he pleaded for the removal of all impediments to human intercourse among the nations of the world “in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race,” and maintained “that not religion only but unbiased common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches.” In the same letter he advocated the establishment of a ‘Congress’ to which “all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the Natives of any two civilised countries with constitutional governments” might be submitted and “settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings between them from generation to generation,”—thus, with the vision of a prophet, as it were, clearly foreshadowing the principle underlying the League of Nations, and, like a practical statesman, laying down a scheme for an International Court of Justice. [The correspondence which in this connection passed between him and the Board of Control and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France is reproduced in Appendix A].

Difficulties in his way of visiting France having been removed, Rammohun came to Paris in the autumn of 1832. He was received there

"with the highest consideration. Literary as well as political men, strove to testify their respect for their extraordinary guest. He was introduced to Louis Philippe, with whom he had the honour of dining more than once, and our Brahmin spoke in warm terms of the King's condescension and kindness." [*Asiatic Journal*, Sept.-Dec., 1833.] Rammohun returned to England in January, 1833, and put up with John and Joseph Hare, brothers of his friend David Hare of Calcutta, in their hospitable mansion at 48, Bedford Square. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article, "The Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy," in the *Modern Review*, October, 1929].

#### (50) The "Suttee" Memoria's and Counter-Memorials:

The orthodox Hindu leaders of Calcutta, at the instance of the Dharma Sabha, made an appeal to the King in Council against Lord William Bentinck's decree abolishing the practice of *Suttee*. Against this Rammohun drafted and took with him from India a counter-petition and presented it to the House of Commons [*Asiatic Journal*, May, 1831, pp. 20-21]. The Raja had the satisfaction of being present when the appeal against the abolition of the inhuman rite was rejected by the Privy Council and the decision announced on the 11th July, 1832.

The Privy Councillors who heard the appeal, at the Council Chamber, Whitehall, were the Lord President of the Council, the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the first Lord of the Admiralty, the Paymaster of the Forces, the Marquis of Wellesley, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Amherst, Lord John Russell, Sir James Graham, Sir L. Shadwell, and Sir W. [E ?] H. East. "The Raja," we read in a contemporary account, "sat near their Lordships."

#### (51) Renewal of the East India Company's Charter:

The question of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter came up before the House of Commons for consideration early in 1831. The House appointed a Select Committee to consider the renewal, and Rammohun was invited to appear and give evidence before it regarding conditions in India. Miss Collet in her biography of the Raja says that Rammohun declined this invitation, but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications" to the Board of Control. Miss Mary Carpenter, however, thinks that the Raja had actually been examined by the Committee. She writes in her *Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England* (1866), that . . . "his time and thoughts were continually occupied with the proceedings of the Government, and affording information and advice whenever they were required. Everything else was made subservient to this great object. Frequently was the noble form of the illustrious stranger seen within the precincts of our Houses of Parliament, as those still remember who were there 35 years ago." (The italics are ours.—Ed.).

Of the "Communications" themselves Dr. Lant Carpenter wrote in his memoir of the Raja, that they show "with what closeness of observation, soundness of judgment and comprehensiveness of views he had

considered the various circumstances which interfered with its (India's) improvement, or which, on the other hand, tended to promote it. They show him to be at once the Philosopher and Patriot. They are full of practical wisdom; and there is reason to believe that they were highly valued by the Government, and that they aided in the formation of the new system, by which the well-being of our vast dependencies in India must be so greatly affected for good or for ill."

It is very interesting to note that when various schemes of future government of India were being suggested and discussed in England in connection with the renewal of the Charter, a humorous writer published a play, entitled "Plans for the Government of India—A Drama," in which he put these words in the mouth of one of his characters, a candidate for Parliament:—"I propose, therefore, in the first place that Raja Rammohun Roy be appointed Governor-General of India; that all the judicial posts be filled by Mahomedans [the Raja held in his written evidence before the Select Committee that the Mahomedans had better legal training and were more fitted for the judicial posts than the Hindus—*Editor*]; all the revenue offices be filled by Hindus; and the Police be executed by East Indians or Indo-Britons. The beauty of this plan, ladies and gentlemen, consists in this: The Raja is neither a Hindoo, a Mohomedan nor a Christian, so that he can have no bias towards any part of the population in India; and the rest being antagonistical, that is opposed to each other, they would keep, by their very opposition, the whole machine of Government in steady operation, just as an arch is retained firmly together by contrary pressure on all sides of it" [*Asiatic Journal*, Jan.-April, 1832, pp. 281-288].

To go on with our account however. The Report of the Select Committee on the Company's Charter was completed and presented to Parliament in August, 1832. It was before the Court of Directors in the months of March and April, 1833, and its recommendations agreed to. They were then drafted as a Bill and presented in the House of Commons in June. It was duly passed and received the Royal assent on August 20, 1833. The Raja was, however, not satisfied with it. Miss Collet says: "Possibly the terms of the new Charter were not to Rammohun's mind." And no wonder, for even the very modest proposal of the Raja, that, in enacting any new measure, the Government should consult "a few of the most distinguished individuals in the European and Native community for their suggestions," was not embodied in the East India Bill. We, however, find the Editor of the *Bengal Spectator*, in referring to Rammohun in July, 1842, observing, that "it is to him that we are in great measure indebted for the concessions in regard to the privileges of Natives contained in the late Charter (1833)."

The various improvements suggested by Rammohun in the administration of India included trial by Jury, appointment of Indian Judicial Assessors, Joint Judges, Regular Public Registers and the Codification of Civil and Criminal Law, besides improvements of the Revenue System, Tenure of Land, Rate of Rent, Title to Land, and of the condition of the Peasants and "inhabitants at large."

The "Communications" from the Raja to the Board of Control were later embodied in a volume, which was published in London by Smith Elder & Co. under the title of "Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems in India, and of the General Character and Condition of its Native Inhabitants, as submitted in Evidence to the Authorities in England." We have, however, been told by one of the Judges of the Calcutta High Court, that this volume does not contain *all* that the Raja communicated to the Board. His *entire* evidence is to be found, we are told by the same authority, in the Appendix to the *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company*, published in 1831-33. We, therefore, indicate below the places in the above Report where the "Communications" and the Evidence of the Raja are to be found.

(1) 1831 : Vol. V. : pp. 716-723.—Copy of communication between Rammohun Roy and the Board of Control relative to the Revenue and Judicial System of India. 54 questions proposed to Rammohun Roy, and his answers, dated 19th August, 1831. Subjects : Revenue System of India, Tenure of Land, Rate of Rent, Title to Land, Improvement of the State of the cultivators and inhabitants at large.

(2) Pp. 723-726.—Paper on the Revenue System of India, by Rammohun Roy, dated London, August 19th, 1831.

(3) Pp. 726-739.—78 questions and answers, dated, London, September 19th, 1831.

(4) Pp. 739-741.—13 queries and answers, dated, London, September 28th, 1831.

(5) 1831-32 : Vol. VIII : Section V, pp. 341-343.—Remarks by Rammohun Roy are given on the Settlement of Europeans in India, dated 14th July, 1832.

(6) 1833 : pp. 366.—The Evidence of Rammohun Roy, respecting the condition of the ryots in India.

A side note for reference, p. 366, opposite to this mention of Rammohun Roy, has these words : "Evidence before Committee of 1831. Evidence before this Committee. A to G, 35, p. 5, min.," which seems to show that the Raja had been examined before a Committee of the House of Commons. [See Mary Carpenter's *Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England*, Chapter II]

## (52—53) The Fatal Malady: The Last Hours:

Overwork and inhospitable climate had considerably affected the health of the Raja in England. His liver, we are told, was affected; "he had grown very stout and looked full and flushed." Bad health coupled with mental anxiety, caused by pecuniary embarrassment, darkened his last days in a strange land. The failure of the Banking House of Messrs. Mackintosh & Co., his agents in Calcutta, and of the House of Messrs. Rickards Mackintosh & Co., his agents in London, put him in a position of great difficulty (1833). He was obliged to request the Court of Directors of the East India Company to assist him with a loan of £2,000 on his personal security, to enable him to proceed to India. The Court of Directors (in their letter of 30th July, 1833) declined to make the advance upon his personal security, thus adding to his mental anxiety, which contributed to aggravate his ill health.

[See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article "The Last Days of Raja Ram-mohun Roy" in the *Modern Review*, October, 1929.]

Wearied in body and mind, the Raja came to Bristol early in September, accompanied by Miss Hare, the sister of his friend, David Hare of Calcutta, to have some rest and change under the hospitable roof of Miss Castle, a ward of his friend, Dr. Lant Carpenter, the Pastor of Lewin's Mead Chapel of the city. Stapleton Grove, the beautiful and commodious mansion of the Castles, offered a quiet country life to the jaded nerves of the Raja. His adopted son Raja Ram, who had accompanied him to England, was being educated here. With Rammohun came also his two Hindu servants, Ramhurry Doss and Ramrotun Mukerjee. The charming hospitality of Miss Castle and her aunt, Miss Kiddell, the congenial company of Dr. Carpenter and other admiring friends proved "something like a haven of rest" for the Raja.

On the 19th September the Raja suddenly fell ill. He had fever attended with severe headache. Next day he was very restless, "changing from the bed to the sofa on the ground." At about midnight his extremities suddenly became very cold, his pulse weak, "with the appearance of collapse." Medicines, internal and external, restored him. He slept with his eyes open. The attending physician found him in the need of a nurse and begged him to allow his friend's sister, Miss Hare, to attend him constantly. The Raja objected on the grounds of propriety and was assured that customs in England rendered it quite proper. He relented and Miss Hare was admitted and nursed the Raja with the devotion of a daughter. On the 22nd the Raja's condition remaining much the same as before, another doctor (Dr. Prichard, the author of "The Physical History of Man") was called in in the morning. In the evening the Raja was a little better. He observed that he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had the best advice in Bristol and thanked his friends for their kindness and attendance upon him. He took a turn for the worse the next day, having passed a restless night with interrupted sleep and eyes open. Yet another Doctor (Dr. Carrick) was called in, and the head appearing to be the organ most affected, leeches were applied. But the illness moved on towards its fatal issue with great rapidity. The Raja was in a comatose condition, followed by an attack of spasm, with convulsive twitchings of the mouth; the left arm and leg appeared paralysed.

At last came the fatal day—the 27th September, 1833. And let us quote here in full from the journal of the attending physician, Dr. Estlin.

"He became worse every few minutes, his breathing more rattling and impeded, his pulse imperceptible. He moved about his right arm constantly and his left arm a little a few hours before his death. It was a beautiful moonlight night; on one side of the window, as Mr. Hare, Miss Kiddell and I looked out of it, was the calm rural midnight scene; on the other, this extraordinary man dying. I shall never forget the moment. Miss Hare, now hopeless and overcome, could not summon courage to hang over



## RAMMOHUN ROY : STORY OF HIS LIFE

the dying Rajah as she did while soothing or feeding him ere hope had left her, and remained sobbing in the chair near; the young Rajah was generally holding his hand. . . . At half-past two Mr. Hare came into my room and told me it was all over. His last breath was drawn at 2-25."

The Raja talked very little during his illness except to thank his physicians and friends. He was often observed to be engaged in prayer. Miss Collet writes: "His utterance of the sacred AUM—one of the last words he was heard to utter—suggested that at the solitary gate of death as well as in the crowded thoroughfare of life the contemplation of the Supreme Being was the chief preoccupation of his soul."

The morning after the death a cast of the Raja's head and face was taken, and an examination of the body, which had a "beautiful majestic look," took place. The "brain was found to be inflamed containing some fluid and covered with a kind of purulent effusion: its membrane also adhered to the skull. . . . The case appeared to be one of fever producing great prostration of the vital powers. . . ." [See *The Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England* by Mary Carpenter: Chapter III].

### (54) The Interment:

The question arose after the Raja's death as to *how* and *where* his mortals remains were to be laid at rest. "The Rajah's illness", writes Mary Carpenter, "had been so sudden, . . . that he had given no directions as to his last wishes. It was known, however, that he adhered to all Brahminical customs, which, in his opinion, did not savour of idolatry; this was not from any value which he attached to them, so much as to avoid all unnecessary cause of offence to his countrymen, which might lessen with them the influence of his writings. Two [*sic*] Brahmin servants continually attended on him, and after his death they found upon him the thread indicating his caste. The attached friends whose advice and assistance he had often sought in London, gave it as their opinion that with these known feelings of his, it would not be right to inter him in an ordinary burying ground." "Besides this," says Dr. Carpenter, "the Rajah had repeatedly expressed the wish that, in case of his dying in England, a small piece of freehold ground might be purchased for his burying place, and a cottage be built on it for the gratuitous residence of some respectable poor person, to take charge of it. Every difficulty, however, was removed by the offer of Miss Castle, in which she had the warm accordance of all her intimate friends, to appropriate to the object a beautifully adapted spot, in a shrubbery near her lawn, and under some fine elms. There this revered and beloved person was interred, on the 18th of October, about two p.m."

Let us conclude by giving the account of this solemn function in the beautiful and touching words of Mary Carpenter: "At length," she writes, "all the preparations were made. The Messrs. Hare had come from London, and those only were invited to assemble at Stapleton Grove who had been personally connected with the Rajah."

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Miss Castle's guardian and immediate connections, the Messrs. Hare and their niece [sister], who had attended on him in his last illness like a daughter, and young Raja Ram, his adopted son, with the Brahmin servants; the medical attendants, including Mr. Estlin with his venerable mother and young daughter; Dr. Jerrard; the celebrated John Foster; my father and myself. Soon after noon was the shrine containing the mortal remains of that glorious spirit, slowly and solemnly, in the deepest silence, borne down the broad gravel walk, followed by us his mourning friends, who had but lately known him in earth, but who hoped to meet him in the Father's Mansions above. The bearers wound along a shady walk, which his foot had doubtless often trodden, and there deposited their sacred burden in the appointed resting place! No voice ventured to express the deep thoughts which must have filled every breast! 'Who could have spoken over such a grave?' afterwards said John Foster."

As there could be no regular entry of the interment in any official registers, those who witnessed it signed a document specially drawn up for the purpose, in case such a document should be needed for any legal purposes. [A facsimile of the Funeral Document is reproduced in this booklet.]

### (55) Where His Earth'y Remains Rest:

Stapleton Grove was not to be the final resting place of Rammohun. A few years after the Raja's death, it passed out of the Castle family. And the public could not have the same access to the grave as it had under the former owners. It was also felt that a befitting monument should be erected over the Raja's grave. When Rammohun's beloved friend and collaborator, the "Prince" Dwarkanath Tagore came to England in 1842, he came commissioned by the admirers of the Raja in Calcutta "to rescue the grave of that illustrious man from the neglect to which it had been consigned, and to erect over it some memorial which shall at least serve to direct the steps of future pilgrims from India to England to the place where his remains rest." Accordingly Dwarkanath, on his arrival in England, had the case containing the Raja's coffin removed from Stapleton Grove to the beautiful cemetery of Arno's Vale on the outskirts of Bristol. On the 29th of May, 1843, the mortal remains of Rammohun were once more interred here, and in the spring of the year following, on the sacred spot was erected a beautiful tomb of stone, resembling a Hindu temple. In 1872 the tomb was thoroughly repaired and an inscription carved on it. [The inscription will be found elsewhere in this booklet.]

[See the article by Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh on "The First Memorial Meeting in Calcutta to do honour to the memory of a great Indian Citizen" in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, December 20, 1930.]

## THE RAJA : A LOVER OF FREEDOM

" He would be free, or not be at all. He must breathe an atmosphere of freedom, and not finding one ready-made to his hand, he made one for himself. He felt with the old English poet, 'My mind to me a Kingdom is', and from this free domain, he unweariedly directed his attacks against those systems of spiritual, social, and political oppression of which, by the necessity of circumstances, he was part and parcel, either as actor or sufferer, as priest or victim: and most earnestly—to his high honour be it spoken—against that system of spiritual and social tyranny which conferred on himself peculiar and invidious and pernicious distinctions and privileges. Love of freedom was, perhaps, the strongest passion of his soul—freedom not of the body merely, but of the mind—freedom not of action merely, but of thought. Almost instinctively he tore away and trampled under the foot the fetters which the religion of his own people, the usages of his own country, his family, descent, and his personal position, had imposed. If obstacles arose in his path, he fearlessly overturned them. If an attack was made even by implication merely, on his mental freedom, he resisted it with an irrepressible sense of deep injury and insult. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him in religion and politics, and still more remarkably even of those whom the laws of nature and of society subjected to his undisputed control. . . . This love of freedom, so strikingly characteristic of the man, . . . was a rational conviction springing from his belief in the noble purposes which a well-regulated and self-restrained liberty is capable of conferring on the individual and on society. He did not seek to limit the enjoyment of it to any class, or colour, or race, or nation, or religion. His sympathies embraced all mankind".

—WILLIAM ADAM.

He the undersigned were present at the interment of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, on Friday the 18th day of October, 1833, in a spot under several Elms, adjoining the Lawn at Stapleton Grove, the residence of Miss Castle and of her Maternal Aunt and Guardian Miss Hiddell. The interment took place in silence and without any ceremony.

Ann Hiddell Stapleton Grove  
 Catherine Castle Stapleton Grove  
 Edm Hare, 48 Bedford Square London  
 Joseph Hare, 48 Bedford Square London  
 James Hare 48 Bedford Square  
 Rajah Ramm Roy: 48 Bedford Square London  
 John & Bishop Collier, Surgeon, Bristol.  
 Geo. E. Sanders. - Clifton - One of the  
 Guardians: of Miss Castle.  
 Lamb Carpenter L.L.D. Protestant Dissenting  
 Minister, Bristol - One of the Guardians.  
 of Miss Castle.  
 Susanna Estlin Bristol.  
 Joseph Henry Jeward D.C.L. Principal of the  
 Bristol College & Fellow of Jesus College Cambridge  
 Mary Carpenter 2 Greek Lane St. Bristol  
 Elizabeth Dawson Stapleton Grove  
 Mary Anne Estlin 47 Park Street  
 Ramroten Mukerjee এরাবুজাউদ - Bristol.  
 Ramharry Das  
 Ramkrishna

Mr Harris. Mr H Castle, Rev J Foster, Miss Foster, Mr B Smith, & Mr Hiddell were also present, but their signatures were not affixed.

FUNERAL DOCUMENT CERTIFYING TO  
 THE INTERMENT OF RAMMOHUN ROY



DEATH MASK OF RAMMOHUN ROY

# RAMMOHUN ROY AND MODERN INDIA

*By*

RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

*Editor of "The Modern Review" and "Prabasi,"  
Calcutta*

The Editor of *The Modern Review* and *Prabasi* wrote this monograph as an Introduction to the second edition of *The English Works of Raja Ram-mohun Roy*, published by the Panini office, Allahabad, in 1906. Subsequently, in 1918, he published it as a booklet, which, however, is now out of print. The text here has been taken from that booklet, partially revised by the Author, and somewhat abridged by the Editor.

ALL earnest attempts at reform, whether religious, social, political, or of any other description, are based on faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice and humanity, which is synonymous with a belief in the moral government of the Universe. This is an essential element in religious belief. One would, therefore, expect to find Raja Rammohun Roy, the first all-round reformer in modern India, "above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able to go so far or to remove his countrymen so mightily as he did but for the driving power of an intense theistic passion.\*"

Raja's religion—at once universal and national.

As in his life so in his writings, religion occupies the foremost place. His writings on religious subjects are the most important and most voluminous. But their very extent and variety are apt to puzzle those who may strive to find out the exact nature of his religious faith. The late Babu Rajnarain Bose had it from his father, a disciple of the Raja, that the latter, before his departure for England, had foretold that after his death various sects would claim him as belonging to their own particular ranks, but he declared that he did not belong to any particular sect. What the Raja foresaw has actually taken place. "It has been said that Rammohun Roy delighted to pass for a believer in the Vedanta with the Hindus, for a Christian among the adherents of that creed, and for a disciple of the Koran with the champions of Islamism. The truth is that his eclecticism equalled his sincerity."† It would be out of place here to enter into a discussion of the question of his religious belief. Suffice it to say that he believed in pure theism, as his *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin* on the one hand and the Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj on the other, in addition to many of his other works, prove conclusively. He did not reject any truth to be found in any scriptures or in the teachings of any prophet or saint; he revered and accepted truth from all quarters: but at the same time he did not accept any book or teacher as infallible. It should not, however, be forgotten that, though he was thus cosmopolitan in his acceptance of truth, there are reasons to think that he believed in what may be called national or racial manifestations or developments of universal theism.

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\*Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, the Raja's English biographer, writes: "Rammohun made no secret of the theistic passion which ruled his life. A favourite disciple remarked that, whenever he spoke of the Universal Theism, to the advocacy of which he had devoted himself, he was moved even to tears."—*Editor*.

†*The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought*, by Count Goblet d'Alviella, p. 233.



At the time when he established the Brahmo Samaj he meant it to be simply a meeting-ground for people of all sects who wished to unite for divine-worship, "a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the author and preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever."\*

It seems to us, that the Raja may have thought that Theism, though at bottom one all over the world, has yet found various expressions among different races; and though abstract truth is thinkable, yet as it finds actual manifestation in some concrete shape, it is the part of wisdom to allow the abstract universal Theism in all countries and among all races to keep its native shape and colour, in which it is embodied, freed, of course, from all that is base and impure, with a broad spirit of toleration for other shapes and colours; and that the future unity of the human race in religion is not to be realised by all mankind following the creed of this or that sect, but by each nation or race giving up all such erroneous and superstitious beliefs and pernicious customs and lifeless rituals as clash with pure Theism, but in every thing else keeping all that is racy of the soil, all that distinctively belongs to the religious genius of that nation or race, in a spirit of discriminating reverence for its own past and of respect and toleration for others.

Professor Monier Williams speaks of him as the first really earnest investigator in the science of comparative theology, which the world has produced.

#### AS A SOCIAL REFORMER

position  
'women. Social customs and practices have been and are in all countries more or less connected with the religious beliefs of the people. It is, therefore, only natural that Rammohun Roy's programme of religious reform should lead on to and embrace social reform. In all countries, and specially in India, social reform consists chiefly in doing away with the disabilities or sufferings incident to difference of sex or the accident of birth. Or, in other words, social reformers have chiefly to fight with the spirit of caste and its evils and the subjection of women to the

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\*The passage quoted above is from the Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj, of which the late Mahadeva Govind Ranade said :—"The spirituality, the deep piety and universal toleration of this document represent an ideal of beauty and perfection which it may yet take many centuries before its full significance is understood by our people."—*Editor.*

selfish interests and pleasures or supposed interests of the male sex.

Rammohun Roy's chief claim to the gratitude of Hindu womanhood is the courageous and devoted part that he played in the movement for the abolition of the *Suttee*. He may or may not have been the central figure in that movement, but it must be admitted by all that but for his exertions that inhuman custom would not have been put down by law so soon as it was.

Abolition  
of the  
"Suttee."

But to prevent the murder of widows was only to create another problem, namely, the amelioration of their condition. It is even now a question as to how we can best better their lot. Many solutions of the problem have been proposed and attempted : their re-marriage; giving them such training as to enable them to lead honourable, useful and independent lives; so changing the Hindu law of inheritance as to make the means of living of Hindu widows less precarious, &c. His *Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance* was intended to attain the last object. That the condition of helpless widows deeply touched his heart appears also from No. VI of the *Sambad Kaumudi*, which contained "an appeal to the rich Hindus of Calcutta to constitute a society for the relief of destitute widows, upon the principles of the Civil and Military Widows' Fund established by order of Government."

Women's  
Right to  
Property.

That he was earnestly in favour of the education of women is quite clear from many passages in his writings, such, for instance, as the following, taken from his *Second Conference on the Practice of Burning Widows Alive* :—

His  
estimate of  
women.

. . . . How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the Prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastras; moreover, in the *Brihadaranyak-Opanishad* of the *Yajur Veda*, it is clearly stated that Yajnavalkya imported divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it!

Secondly. You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised: for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution.

Thirdly. With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the number of deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by

which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged ; which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer such misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the fourth place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes ; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards ; while a woman, who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic.

Views on  
Child-  
Marriage,  
Polygamy,  
etc.

It may be safely said that had he lived to return home from England and work here for a few years more, his contact with the comparatively enlightened womanhood of the West would certainly have borne fruit in the establishment of educational institutions for Indian girls and women. That Miss Mary Carpenter came out to India to labour for the good of Indian women is due mainly to her contact with the Raja. Regarding the re-marriage of child-widows, his [Bengali] biographer, Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee says :—"We have heard that Ram-mohun Roy used to express a desire to his friends that the re-marriage of child-widows should become prevalent. When he went to England a rumour spread everywhere that on coming back home he would introduce the custom of the re-marriage of widows."

It will appear from a study of his *Brief Remarks regarding the Ancient Rights of Females* that he was opposed to polygamy, *kulinism* and the practical selling of girls in marriage. He showed from the Shastras that second marriages were authorised only under certain circumstances, and observed :—

"Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of a first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicides, would have been necessarily very much reduced."

We have no indication in his works of his views on child-marriage. Perhaps in his days in Bengal, though such marriages must have been customary, their consummation was postponed to a maturer age, thus minimizing the evil to some extent, as is still the case in some parts of India. But one can only speculate as to what he would have done had he lived to come back from England. For, a man who had such innate chivalry in his nature that he would never take his seat if any woman of what rank so ever remained standing in his presence, could not have failed to observe the evil effects on women of such a custom.

It is related that he gave his grand-daughter in marriage when she was 15 or 16.

That Rammohun Roy had not failed to observe the evil effects of caste will appear from the extract from one of his letters printed below :—

Views on  
Caste  
system.

"I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. . . . . It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."

No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi*, too, prints the plea of a philanthropist (probably himself), who, observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate "such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence." By crossing the ocean, dining with Europeans, and in other ways, the Raja, to a great extent, broke through the unreasonable and injurious restrictions imposed by caste. He published with a Bengali translation the first chapter of a Sanskrit work against caste, named *Vajrasuchi*, by Mrityunjaya-charyya.

Among the causes of the political subjection of India, he mentions caste in the following passage taken from the *Brahmucal Magazine* :—

"We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries, and the cause of such degradation has been our excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals ; as well as our division into castes, which has been the source of want of unity among us."

While civilization produces culture, refinement and sociability, its excess enervates and makes men too mild.

In recent years various means have been suggested for bringing about the fusion of castes and sub-castes and sects by facilitating inter-marriage among them. The means proposed by Rammohun Roy was the adoption of the *Saiva* form of marriage prescribed in the following *sloka* of the "Maha-nirvana Tantra" :

"There is no discrimination of age and caste or race in the *Saiva* marriage. As enjoined by *Siva*, one should marry a woman who has no husband and who is not 'sapinda', that is, who is not within the prohibited degrees of marriage."

Rammohun contended that orthodox Hindus ought to consider *Saiva* marriages as valid as *Vaidik* marriages. Had his views prevailed, widow-marriage, inter-caste and inter-racial marriage, and post-puberty marriage would all have been considered valid according to Hindu usage.

AS AN EDUCATIONIST

Pioneer  
and  
Promoter of  
Education.

It is well-known that Rammohun Roy himself founded and helped others in founding schools. He took a prominent part in the great educational controversy between the "Orientalists" and the "Anglicists," and sided with the latter. But for his opposition the clamour of the former for the exclusive pursuit of Oriental studies would most probably have prevailed. His *Letter on English Education* to Lord Amherst is a remarkably convincing production. For the direct and indirect beneficial results of Western education, we are indebted to Raja Rammohun Roy as much as to Lord Macaulay, Lord William Bentinck, David Hare and others.\*

Father of  
Modern  
Bengali  
Prose.

Rammohun Roy wrote text-books in Bengali on Grammar, Geography, Astronomy and Geometry. He may be considered as practically the father of modern Bengali *literary* prose. He taught his people the use of marks of punctuation. There was in his nature a deep vein of genuine poetry, too; as his Bengali hymns show. He was the first to write theistic hymns in Bengali. Pandit Ramagati Nyayaratna, a well-known Hindu historian of the Bengali language and literature, truly observes that "they appear to possess the power of melting even stony hearts, of making the most irreligious devoted to God and of making hearts sunk in worldliness detached from the world."

The Raja  
as a  
Journalist.

His Bengali journal, the *Sambad Kaumudi*, first appeared in 1821. He is practically the founder of native journalism in India. The *Sambad Kaumudi*† was not exclusively or chiefly a political publication. It, as well as his Persian newspapers, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* or "Mirror of Intelligence," had an educational

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\*The part played by Rammohun in the introduction and promotion of Western education, in drawing the Christian missions into the field of Indian education and in the founding of the Hindu College in Calcutta has been described in the "Notes" in supplement to the *Story of His Life* given in the preceding pages. Rammohun's advocacy of modern learning in his letter to Lord Amherst (1823) for "an enlightened system of education embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences," was written 12 years before Macaulay wrote his famous minute (1835). But whereas Rammohun laid emphasis on the teaching of Western sciences, Macaulay pleaded for the establishment of schools "in which the English language might be well and thoroughly taught."—Editor.

†Some of the contents of the earlier numbers of the *Sambad Kaumudi* may be given here:—

No. I.—An appeal to the Government for the establishment of a school for the gratuitous instruction of the poor but respectable Hindus.

No. II.—Humble address to the Government soliciting the extension of trial by jury to Mofussil Zilla and Provincial Courts of Judicature.

No. III.—An appeal to the Government to relieve the Hindu community from the inconvenience consequent upon there being only one Ghant for the burning of dead bodies whereas an immense space of ground has been granted for the burial of Christians.

(Footnote continued on next page).

purpose, too. Besides politics, subjects of a historical, literary and scientific character were treated of therein.\*

Lawyers of eminence have declared that the legal writings of the Raja, such as his *Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights, The Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal*, would do credit to jurists of the highest standing.† His legal writing

Appeal to Government for the prevention of the exportation of the greatest part of the produce of rice from Bengal to foreign ports.

Appeal to Government to enable the middle class of native subjects to avail themselves of the treatment of European physicians.

Appeal to the Calcutta Magistrates to resort to rigorous measures for relieving the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta from the serious grievances of Christian gentlemen driving their buggies amongst them and cutting and lashing them with whips, without distinction of sex or age, while they quietly assembled in immense numbers to see the images of their deities pass in the Chitpore Road, when many of them, through terror and consternation caused by the lashing inflicted on the spectators, fell down into drains, while others were trampled under foot by the crowd.

\*The contents of the first issue of the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* will prove of interest :—

1. The Editor informs the public that although so many Newspapers have been published in this city to gratify their readers, yet there is none in Persian for the information of those who are well versed in that language, and do not understand English, particularly the people of Upper Hindusthan. He has therefore undertaken to publish a Persian Newspaper every week.

2. Government Regulation respecting the period Company's Servants can be absent from their duty on account of their health.

3. Difference with China.

4. Trial of John Hayes, Esq., Judge of Tipperah.

5. Release of Prisoners on the 23rd of April: King's Birthday.

6. Shipping Intelligence.

7. Cause of Enmity between Russia and the Sublime Porte.

8. Exploits of Rungeet Singh.

9. Plentiful crop of corn this year in Hindoostan.

10. Pair of Elephants for sale.

11. Price of Indigo and Opium.

12. Proposal sent to the inhabitants of Shajuhanabad, by an officer of the Honourable Company, pointing out the advantages of having an English School instituted in that city, to which however the Natives paid no attention."

Welcoming editorially the advent of this Persian Weekly started by Rammohun, the *Calcutta Journal* (20th April, 1822, p. 561) of Mr. James Silk Buckingham wrote :—

"The Editor is a Brahmin of high rank, a man of liberal sentiments, and by no means deficient in loyalty, well versed in the Persian language, and possessing a competent knowledge of English: intelligent, with a considerable share of general information and an insatiable thirst after knowledge."—*Editor*

†The late Sir Gooroodas Bauerjee, a Judge of the Calcutta High Court and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, in a speech that he delivered as Chairman at Rammohun Roy's Death Anniversary Meeting in 1889, said :—"His (Rammohun's) two essays—one on the rights of

AS A POLITICAL REFORMER

To the public Rammohun Roy is best known as a religious and social reformer. To many he is also known as a litterateur and educationist. But he is not so well-known as a political reformer and agitator. A brief account of his politics may not therefore be out of place here.

Raja's  
Love of  
Freedom.

Mr. William Adam, a Baptist Missionary, whose association with Raja Rammohun Roy led him to adopt Unitarian opinions, bears the following testimony to his love of liberty :—

"He would be free or not be at all. . . . Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul, . . . freedom not of action merely, but of thought. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him."

It was this love of liberty that was the source of all his political opinions and the mainspring of all his political activity. It made him take interest in and deeply sympathise with all political movements all over the world that had for their object the advancement of popular freedom. Some instances may here be given of Rammohun's cosmopolitan sympathies in the region of politics.

"When the intelligence reached India that the people of Naples after extorting a constitution from their despotic king were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops, in obedience to the joint mandate of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia, and Naples, Rammohun felt it [so] keenly,"

that in a letter to Mr. Buckingham, dated August 11, 1821, he wrote :—

"I am afraid I must be under the necessity of denying myself the pleasure of your society this evening: more especially as my mind is depressed by the late news from Europe. . . . From the late unhappy news I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy.

"Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. *Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been and never will be ultimately successful.*"

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the Hindoo females and the other on the rights of a Hindoo over ancestral property—show at once his deep erudition as a lawyer and his broad views as a jurist; and it is to the latter of these two essays that is due in no small measure the advanced state of the law relating to the free alienability of property in Bengal. The concluding paragraph of that essay is well worthy of Rammohun Roy, and will do honour to any lawyer or any jurist in the country. Every one who belongs to the profession to which I have the honour to belong, will perceive here the rudiments of that discussion, which in the writings of Sir Henry Maine, have shed such lustre over his name. And Rammohun Roy was no professional Lawyer." [*Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Sir Gooroodas Banerjee, Calcutta, 1927. p. 360*].—Editor.





colours seemed to kindle his enthusiasm, and to render him insensible to pain."

During the days of the Reform Bill agitation in England, he considered the struggle between the reformers and anti-reformers as a "struggle between liberty and tyranny throughout the world; between justice and injustice, and between right and wrong." He publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, he would renounce his connection with England. There are other indications, in his works, of what in our day is known as the spirit of non-cooperation. It is not difficult to believe that, had he lived now, this spirit would have found expression in some movement of national self-assertion.

#### ATTITUDE TOWARDS MUHAMMADANS

The attitude of Rammohun Roy towards Mussalman rule, society, character and culture was entirely unprejudiced and fraternal. He wore in public the dress worn in Muhammadan courts. In his "Judicial system of India," to the question—

*Q. What is your opinion of the judicial character and conduct of the Hindu and Muhammadan lawyers attached to the courts?*

He replied :

*A. Among the Muhammadan lawyers I have met with some honest men. The Hindu lawyers are in general not well spoken of and they do not enjoy much of the confidence of the public.*

In the "Condition of India," he writes :

I have observed with respect to distant cousins, sprung from the same family, and living in the same district, when one branch of the family had been converted to Mussulmanism, that those of the Muhammadan branch living in a freer manner, were distinguished by greater bodily activity and capacity for exertion, than those of the other branch which had adhered to the Hindoo simple mode of life.

Again :—

*Q. What is the state of industry among them?*

*A. The Mohammedans are more active and capable of exertion than the Hindus, but the latter are also generally patient of labour, and diligent in their employments, and those of the Upper Province not inferior to the Mohammedans themselves in industry.*

*Q. What capability of improvement do they possess?*

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"What!" replied he (upon being asked why he had celebrated by illuminations, by an elegant dinner to about sixty Europeans, and by a speech composed and delivered in English by himself at his house in Calcutta, on the arrival of important news of the success of the Spanish patriots), 'ought I to be insensible to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures wherever they are, or however unconnected by interests, religion or language?'"

This letter was reproduced in "The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature," Vol. XVIII, pp. 575-788, and has been unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, who published it in *The Modern Review* for March, 1932.—Editor.

A. They have the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people.

Q. *What degree of intelligence exists among the native inhabitants?*

A. The Mussulmans, as well as the more respectable classes of Hindus, chiefly cultivated Persian literature, a great number of the former and a few of the latter also extending their studies likewise to Arabic. This practice has partially continued to the present time, and among those who enjoy this species of learning, as well as among those who cultivate Sanskrit literature, many well-informed and enlightened persons may be found, though from their ignorance of European literature, they are not naturally much esteemed by such Europeans as are not well versed in Arabic or Sanskrit.

His opinion of Muhammadan rule is found thus expressed in his "Appeal to the King in Council against the Press Regulation":—

Opinion of  
Muham-  
madan  
Rule.

"Your Majesty is aware, that under their former Muhammadan Rulers, the natives of this country enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussulmans, being eligible to the highest offices in the state, entrusted with the command of armies and to the government of provinces and often chosen as advisers to their Prince, without disqualification or degrading distinction on account of their religion or the place of their birth. They used to receive free grants of land exempted from any payments of revenue, and besides the highest salaries allowed under the Government, they enjoyed free of charge, large tracts of country attached to certain offices of trust and dignity, while natives of learning and talent were rewarded with numerous situations of honour and emolument. Although under the British Rule, the natives of India have entirely lost this political consequence, your Majesty's faithful subjects were consoled by the more secure enjoyment of those civil and religious rights which had been so often violated by the rapacity and intolerance of the Mussulmans; and notwithstanding the loss of political rank and power, they considered themselves much happier in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty than were their ancestors; but if these rights that remain are allowed to be unceremoniously invaded, the most valuable of them being placed at the mercy of one or two individuals, the basis on which they have founded their hopes of comfort and happiness under the British Power, will be destroyed."

Again :—

"Notwithstanding the despotic power of the Mogul Princes who formerly ruled over this country, and that their conduct was often cruel and arbitrary, yet the wise and virtuous among them, always employed two intelligencers at the residence of their Nawabs or Lord Lieutenants, *Akhbar-novees*, or news-writer who published an account of whatever happened, and a *Khoofea-navees*, or confidential correspondent, who sent a private and particular account of every occurrence worthy of notice; and although these Lord Lieutenants were often particular friends or near relations to the Prince, he did not trust entirely to themselves for a faithful and impartial report of their administration, and degraded them when they appeared to deserve it, either for their own faults or for their negligence in not checking the delinquencies of their subordinate officers; which shews that even the Mogul Princes, although their form of Government admitted of nothing better, were convinced, that in a country so rich and so replete with talents,

a restraint of some kind was absolutely necessary, to prevent the abuses that are so liable to flow from the possession of power."

## INDIAN POLITICAL OPINIONS

We now pass on to the Raja's Indian political opinions. Our politics are sure to be tinged by our attitude towards British rule in India. It is, therefore, necessary to know what the Raja thought of British rule in India in his day. In his autobiography\* he writes:—

" . . . . . I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British Power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me, and restored me to his favour: after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants: . . . . "

Raja's  
Fight for  
a free  
Press in  
India

Raja Rammohun Roy believed that a free Press is one of the best safeguards of liberty. This conviction found expression in his *Petitions against the Press Regulation* (1) to the Supreme Court and (2) to the King in Council. The Press Ordinance prescribed that thenceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a license from the Governor-General in Council, signed by the Chief Secretary. The memorial submitted to the Supreme Court "may be regarded as the Arcopagitica of Indian History. Alike in diction and in argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of Indian culture in the East."

This Memorial proving fruitless, Rammohun and his coadjutors appealed to the King in council.† Says Miss Collett:—

\*The autobiographical sketch referred to above is reproduced in Appendix B.—Editor.

†A few passages from this memorable document are reproduced below.—Editor.

31. Men in power hostile to the Liberty of the Press, which is a disagreeable check upon their conduct, when unable to discover any real evil arising from its existence, have attempted to make the world imagine, that it might, in some possible contingency, afford the means of combination against the Government, but not to mention that extraordinary emergencies would warrant measures which in ordinary times are totally unjustifiable, your Majesty is well aware, that a Free Press has never yet caused a revolution in any part of the world, because, while men can easily represent the grievances arising from the conduct of the local authorities to the supreme Government, and thus get them redressed, the grounds of discontent that excite revolution are removed; whereas, where no freedom of the Press existed, and grievances consequently remained unrepresented and unredressed, innumerable revolutions have taken place in all parts of the globe, or if prevented by the armed force of the Government, the people continued ready for insurrection.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The appeal is one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand. Its stately periods and not less stately thought recall the eloquence of the great orators of a century ago. In language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty, it invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British History."

This Memorial, too, proved unavailing. The Privy Council declined to comply with the petition.

A new Jury Act came into operation in the beginning of 1827. On August 17th, 1829, Rammohun wrote to Mr. J. Crawford and entrusted to him petitions against the Act for presentation to both Houses of Parliament, signed by Hindus and Muslims. He thus concisely stated the grounds of grievance :—

"In his famous Jury Bill, Mr. Wynn, the late President of the Board of Control, has, by introducing religious distinctions into the judicial system of this country, not only afforded just grounds for dissatisfaction among the Natives in general, but has excited much alarm in the breast of every one conversant with political principles. Any Natives, either Hindu or Mohamedan, are rendered by this Bill subject to judicial trial by Christians either European or Native, while Christians, including Native converts, are exempted from the degradation of being tried either by a Hindu or Mussulman juror, however high he may stand in the estimation of society. This Bill also denies both to Hindus and Mohamedans the honour of a seat in the Grand Jury even in the trial of fellow-Hindus or Mussulmans. This is the sum total of Mr. Wynn's late Jury Bill, of which we bitterly complain."

The Jury Act of 1827.

Rammohun went on to suggest a possibility, "which is by no means so remote now as when he wrote" :—

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36. It is well known that despotic Governments naturally desire the suppression of any freedom of expression which might tend to expose their acts to the obloquy which ever attends the exercise of tyranny or oppression and the argument they constantly resort to is, that the spread of knowledge is dangerous to the existence of all legitimate authority, since, as a people become enlightened, they will discover that by a unity of effort, the many may easily shake off the yoke of the few, and thus become emancipated from the restraints of power altogether, forgetting the lesson derived from history, that in countries which have made the smallest advances in civilization, anarchy and revolution are most prevalent—while on the other hand, in nations the most enlightened, any revolt against governments, which have guarded inviolate the rights of the governed, is most rare, and that the resistance of a people advanced in knowledge, has ever been—not against the existence,—but against the abuses of the Governing power. Canada, during the late war with America, afforded a memorable instance of the truth of this argument. The enlightened inhabitants of that colony, finding that their rights and privileges had been secured to them, their complaints listened to, and their grievances redressed by the British government, resisted every attempt of the United States to seduce them from their allegiance to it. In fact, it may be fearlessly averred, that the more enlightened a people become, the less likely are they to revolt against the governing power, as long as it is exercised with justice tempered with mercy, and the rights and privileges of the governed are held sacred from any invasion.

"Supposing that 100 years hence the Native character becomes elevated from constant intercourse with Europeans and the acquirement of general and political knowledge as well as of modern arts and sciences, is it possible that they will not have the spirit as well as the inclination to resist effectually any unjust and oppressive measures serving to degrade them in the scale of society? It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy."

The letter quoted above is remarkable for the far-sighted glance into the future which it reveals. Here in germ is to be found the national aspiration which is now breaking forth into demands for self-rule.\* Rammohun's English biographer (Miss Sophia Dobson Collet) observes that

"The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind; and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilization inevitably involves. Here, again, Rammohun stands forth as the tribune and prophet of New India."

The  
Champion  
of the  
Peasant.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which was appointed in February, 1831, and reappointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter invited him to appear before it. Rammohun declined this request but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control." The first of these dealt with Revenue. The Raja appears here as the champion of the rack-rented *ryot* (peasant). While the Zamindars or land-holders had been greatly benefited by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community had generally increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. The remedy he asked for was, in the first place, the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the *ryot* in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zamindar so as to ensure a reduction in the *ryot's* rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries or by employing as Collectors low-salaried Indians instead of high-salaried Europeans. It may here be incidentally observed that a century

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\*That Rammohun looked upon the British domination of India as a period of political tutelage, will be amply borne out by what he said (29th June, 1828) to M. Victor Jacquemont, the Frenchman who has left his impressions of India, in his *VOYAGE DANS L'INDE* (Paris, 1841):—"India requires many more years of English domination so that she might not have many things to lose while she is reclaiming her political independence." [See Mr. N. C. Chaudhuri's translation of the interview in the *Modern Review* for June, 1926].—Editor.

ago, when education was in a backward condition, Raja Ram-mohun Roy considered Indians fit for the duties of Collectors. He also considered them well qualified to discharge *all* judicial duties.

He approved of the settlement in India of a few model landlords from England, but was careful to stipulate that they should not be drawn from the lower classes. [But of this more later.]

It admits of no doubt that the condition of the proprietors of land has improved under the system of permanent assessment. But the Government seems at present to believe that that system has resulted in loss of revenue to the State. It is, therefore, important to quote the Raja's opinion on this subject.

Views on  
Permanent  
Settlement

"The amount of assessment fixed on the lands of these provinces at the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), was as high as had ever been assessed, and in many instances higher than had ever before been realized by the exertions of any government, Mohamedan or British. Therefore, the Government sacrificed nothing in concluding that settlement. If it had not been formed the landholders (*Zemindars*) would always have taken care to prevent the revenue from increasing by not bringing the waste lands into cultivation, and by collusive arrangements to elude further demands; while the state of the cultivators would not have been at all better than it is now. However, if the Government had taken the whole estates of the country into its own hands, as in the ceded and conquered provinces and the Madras Presidency, then, by allowing the landholders only ten per cent. on the rents (*Malikanah*), and securing all the rest to the Government, it might no doubt have increased the revenue for a short time. But the whole of the landlords in the country would then have been reduced to the same condition as they are at present in the ceded and conquered Provinces of the Bengal Presidency or rather annihilated, as in many parts of the Madras territory; and the whole population reduced to the same level of poverty. At the same time, the temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own immediate management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shown by innumerable instances in which the estates were kept '*khas*,' i.e., under the immediate management of Government."

"Besides, Government appropriates to itself an enormous duty on the transit and exportation of the produce of the soil, which has, since the period of the Perpetual Settlement, increased to a great amount from the exertions of the proprietors in extending and improving cultivation, under the assurance that no demand of an increase of revenue would be made upon them on account of the progressive productiveness of their estates."

The Raja contrasts the effects of the permanent and periodical systems of assessment in two statements:

"By a comparative view of the revenue of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, from the period of the Perpetual Settlement, it appears that, in the thirty-five years, from 1792-93 to 1827-28, there was a total increase on the whole amount of the revenue of above 100 per cent. (101·71), and that this increase has been steady and progressive up to the present time; . . ."

"By a comparative view of the revenue of the old British territory in Madras, it appears that during the same period of thirty-five years (i.e., from 1793 to 1828) there was an increase of only about

40 per cent. (40·15) on the total amount of the whole revenue. That the increase during the first 17 years was  $43\frac{23}{100}$  per cent. ; that in the next 8 years the increase was only about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. ; and that in the last 18 years there has been a decrease of 2·15 per cent."

In an appendix he urged the Imperial utility of the policy of fixing a maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator, "that their rents, already raised to a ruinous extent, might not be subject to further increase." His advocacy of this policy is so statesmanlike that no apology is needed for quoting his views on the subject. To recognise the indefeasible rights of the *ryots* in the soil would make them loyal to the power that secured them and

"ready to rise in defence of it, as a militia or in any other shape that might be required ; so as to secure the British rule in a foreign and remote empire, alike from internal intrigue and from external aggression without the necessity of keeping on foot an immense standing army at an enormous cost. This consideration is of great importance in respect to the natives of the upper and western provinces, who are distinguished by their superior bravery, and form the greater part of the British Indian Army. If this race of men, who are by no means deficient in feelings of personal honour and regard for family respectability, were assured that their rights in the soil were indefeasible so long as the British power should endure, they would, from gratitude and self-interest, at all times be ready to devote their lives and property in its defence.

"The saving that might be effected by this liberal and generous policy through the substituting of a militia force for a great part of the present standing army, would be much greater than any gain that could be realized by any system of increasing land revenue that human ingenuity could devise. How applicable to this case is the following line of the Persian sage (Saadi):—

*Ba rayat sulh kun wa'z jang i khashm aiman nishin*

*Z'anki shahinshah i adil ra rayat lashkar ast.*

"Be on friendly terms with thy subjects, and rest easy about the warfare of thine enemies ; for to an upright prince his people is an army."

While on the subject of Land Settlement we may say that in 1828, by Regulation III of that year, the Revenue Collector in each district was authorised to dispossess the holders of tax-free lands by his own authority, without reference to any judicial courts, if the collector should be of opinion after such enquiry as might satisfy himself that the title of the proprietor was not valid. It was therein enacted that "such decision of the Collector shall have the force and effect of a decree;" also, that "it shall not be necessary for him to transmit his proceedings to the Board of Revenue," but "the party dispossessed might appeal," and by Art. 3, whether an appeal be filed or not, "that it shall and may be lawful for the Collector immediately to carry into effect his decision by attaching and assessing his lands." This regulation produced great alarm and distrust amongst the natives of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, many of whom petitioned against the principle of one party, who lays

claim to the land, dispossessing an actual possessor at his own discretion. This agitation was led, though unsuccessfully, by Rammohun Roy.\* Reg. III of 1828 is still in force.

Among the principal measures advocated in the Raja's *Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India* were the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the courts of law; the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts; trial by jury, of which the *Panchayet* system was the indigenous parallel; separation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioners; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate; codification of the criminal law and also of the law of India; and consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws. The last reform proposed contains the germs of representative legislative bodies.

Demand for all-round reform of Government.

### VIEWS ON INDIAN ECONOMIC QUESTION

Students of Indian economies are familiar with the fact that every year nearly 45 crores of rupees [now more] of India's capital is drained off to foreign parts without any hope of return. This drain of wealth did not escape the eyes of Rājā Rammohun Roy. In his answers to questions on the "Revenue System of India" he says that as a large sum of money is now annually drawn from India by Europeans retiring from it with the fortunes realised there, a system which would encourage Europeans of capital to become permanent settlers with their families would necessarily greatly improve the resources of the country. He prepared several tables to prove this drain. The following two paragraphs are appended to these tables :—

The "Economic Drain" of India.

"By the evidence of Messrs. Lloyd and Melville (the former, the Accountant-General, and the latter, the Auditor-General of the East India Company), recorded in the Minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 23rd February, 1830, it appears that the proportion of the Indian revenues expended in England on the territorial account amounts, on an average, to £3,000,000 annually. It includes the expense at the Board of Control and India House, pay, absentee allowances and pensions of Civil and Military Officers in Europe for services in India, with interest of money realised there, &c., &c., besides £453,588 for territorial stores consigned to India.

"In a letter of the Court of Directors to the Government of Bengal, dated the 20th of June, 1810, and quoted in the work "On Colonial Policy as applicable to the Government of India," by a very able servant of the Company, holding a responsible situation in Bengal, the Directors state that "it is no extravagant assertion to advance, that the annual remittances to London on account of individuals, have been at the rate of nearly £2,000,000 per annum for a series of years past" (p. 70). From these and other authentic documents the author calculates the amount of

\*Readers interested may refer to the *Petition to the Governor-General Lord Bentinck against Regulation III of 1828 for the Resumption of "Lakheraj" Lands*, reprinted from the *Asiatic Journal* (Vol. I, New Series, Jan.—April, 1830) in the Raja's English Works.—Editor.



capital, or "the aggregate or tribute, public and private, so withdrawn from India from 1765 to 1820, at £100,000,000 (p. 65).

The Settlement of Europeans in India.

It has already been stated that Raja Rammohun Roy was in favour of the settlement in India of European capitalists under certain conditions. Among the advantages likely in his opinion to arise from such settlement was the improvement of the condition of the native inhabitants by European landlords showing them superior methods of cultivation. That this was not altogether a vain expectation appears from some observations in Mr. N. G. Mukerji's *Hand-book of Indian Agriculture*. Says Mr. Mukerji :

"Indeed, Indian agriculture has been actually vastly improved by our contact with the West. European planters have been the means of introducing important innovations. In the most out-of-the-way places of India we find European planters carrying on agricultural experiments and improvements imperceptibly and noiselessly."

This naturally leads one to a consideration of the Raja's *Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans*. It is a paper of rare personal and national importance. But as it raises problems of great magnitude, we refrain from dealing with it here. Suffice it to say that this, his final literary deliverance, holds up to the people of India the prospect of India having English as its *lingua franca*, India socially and in other respects westernized to some extent, India possibly independent and India the Enlightener of Asia.

#### PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL VIEWS

Raja's faith in the capacity of his own people.

Progressive political views imply confidence in the capacity of a people for continuous improvement. Raja Rammohun Roy believed that the people of India "have the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people." He did not believe that Asiatics were naturally an inferior race. In the course of one of his numerous religious controversies "A Christian," having indulged in a tirade about persons being "degraded by Asiatic effeminacy," the Raja reminded him that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay, even Jesus Christ himself, were Asiatics. He wrote :

"Before 'A Christian' indulged in a tirade about persons being 'degraded by Asiatic effeminacy' he should have recollected that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay even Jesus Christ himself, a Divine Incarnation and the founder of the Christian Faith, were ASIATICS, so that if a Christian thinks it degrading to be born or to reside in Asia, he directly reflects upon them."

Rammohun Roy also said :

"If by the 'Ray of Intelligence' for which the *Christian* says we are indebted to the English, he means the introduction of useful mechanical arts, I am ready to express my assent and also grati-

tude ; but with respect to Science, Literature, or Religion, I do not acknowledge that we are placed under any obligation, for by a reference to history it may be proved that the World was indebted to our ancestors for the first dawn of knowledge, which sprang up in the East, and thanks to the Goddess of Wisdom, we have still a philosophical and copious language of our own, which distinguishes us from other nations who cannot express scientific or abstract ideas without borrowing the language of foreigners."

On a perusal of the foregoing pages it will be found that, with the exception of the agitation that has been going on for sometime past for the industrial regeneration of the country, Rammohun Roy laid the foundation of all the principal modern movements for the elevation of our people. Probably, as India is mainly an agricultural country and as, in his days, the pressure on land had not become abnormal owing to the indigenous industries not having disappeared then, to the extent to which they have now declined, the industrial problem did not then press for solution with the same urgency as now. Nevertheless we find that the bearing of the system of caste on industrial prosperity did not escape the keen eyes of Rammohun ; as No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi* printed the "plea of a philanthropist, who observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence."

### AN ESTIMATE OF HIS PERSONALITY

We conclude this sketch with the following estimate of his personality by his biographer, the late Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, who, though an English woman and a Trinitarian Christian, seems, on the whole, to have understood the meaning of his life pretty accurately :—

"Rammohun stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between . . . polytheism and . . . Theism. He was the mediator of his people, harmonizing in his own person, often, by means of his own solitary sufferings, the conflicting tendencies of immemorial tradition and an inevitable enlightenment."

"He embodies the new spirit which arises from the compulsory mixture of races and faiths and civilizations,—he embodies its freedom of enquiry, its thirst for science, its large human sympathy, its pure and sifted ethics, along with its reverent but not uncritical regard for the past, and prudence . . . disinclination towards revolt. But in the life of Rammohun we see, what we hope yet to have shown us in the progress of India, that the secret of the whole movement is religious. Amid all his wanderings Rammohun was saved by his faith. . . . He was a genuine outgrowth of the old

Embodiment of the New Spirit.

Hindu stock; in a soil watered by new influences, and in an atmosphere charged with unwonted forcing power, but still a true scion of the old stock. The Rajah was no merely occidentalized oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian. If we follow the right line of his development we shall find that he leads the way from the orientalism of the past, not to, but through Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both. He preserves continuity throughout, by virtue of his religion, which again supplied the motive force of his progressive movement. The power that connected and restrained, as well as widened and impelled, was religion.

Pioneer  
of New  
India.

"Rammohun thus presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the New India of which he is the type and pioneer. He offers to the new democracy of the West a scarcely less valuable index of what our greatest Eastern dependency may yet become under the imperial sway of the British commonalty. There can be little doubt that, whatever future the destinies may have in store for India, that future will be largely shaped by the life and work of Rammohun Roy. And not the future of India alone. We stand on the eve of an unprecedented intermingling of East and West. The European and Asiatic streams of human development, which have often tinged each other before, are now approaching a confluence which bids fair to form the one ocean-river of the collective progress of mankind. The nearing dawn of these unmeasured possibilities only throws into clearer prominence the figure of the man whose life-story we have told. He was, if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint, of the change that is to come."

## THOUGHTS FROM THE RAJA

"Truth and true religion do not always belong to wealth and power, high names, or lofty palaces."

—"Brahmunical Magazine"—I.

[1821]

\* \* \* \* \*

"It is well-known to the whole world, that no people on earth are more tolerant than the Hindoos, who believe all men to be equally within the reach of Divine beneficence, which embraces the good of every religious sect and denomination."

—"Brahmunical Magazine"—II.

[1821]

\* \* \* \* \*

"...It seems to me that I cannot better employ my time than in an endeavour to illustrate and maintain Truth, and to render service to my fellow-labourers, confiding in the mercy of that Being to whom the motives of our actions and secrets of our hearts are well-known."

—*Preface to the English Translation  
of the "Kuth-Opunishud"*

[1819]

## SOME POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS OF RAMMOHUN

"...Enemies to Liberty and friends of Despotism have never been, and never will be, ultimately successful."

—*In a letter to a friend.*

[August 11, 1821].

"...I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interests. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprises. . . . It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."

—*In a letter to a friend.*

[January 18, 1818].

"...The causes of such degradation has been our excess in civilisation and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals; as well as our division into castes, which has been the source of want of unity among us."

—*In the "Brahmunical Magazine."*

[1821].

"...The struggles are not merely between the reformers and anti-reformers, but between liberty and oppression throughout the world; between justice and injustice; and between right and wrong. But from a reflection on the past events of history, we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily gaining ground notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots."

—*In a letter to a friend.*

[April 27, 1831].

"...It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British Empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy."

—*In a letter to a friend.*

[August 18, 1820].

# RAMMOHUN ROY : THE UNIVERSAL MAN

*By*

SIR BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL, Kt.

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*University of Calcutta;*

*and*

*Lately, Vice-Chancellor, University of Mysore.*

The address printed opposite was delivered by Sir Brajendra Nath Seal at the Death-Anniversary Meeting of Rammohun Roy held at Bangalore on the 27th September, 1924.

THE creative energy in Nature and History, Visvakarma, usually turns out from His workshops standardised products, but there are occasional "tours de force" that deviate from the pattern. Nature has her Himalayan heights and her Pacific depths; the day has its sunrise and its sunset; the history of civilisation her Greece, her India, her Roman and British Empires,—those unique centres of force.

But if we look closely to the advent of great personalities in human history, to the succession of the patriarchs and the lawgivers, the prophets and the master-singers, we seem to find a certain law governing that advent and succession. The earlier race of Supermen was a race of giants. They rose to superb heights, each showing the perfection of one type of excellence. heights which have never since been attained,—a Buddha and a Christ in the revelation of God-in-man, a Homer, a Valmiki and a Dante in poetic creation. But their successors in the same line, as Robert Browning tells us, are great in another way: not so much by height as by breadth, not so much by unique gifts or perfections, as by a synthesis, a harmonious blending of many excellences which had been found to be contradictory or conflicting in previous history. And these composite patterns again crystallise in a few generations into integral types, unique gifts, or perfections, which call for fresh synthesis in the unfolding experience of the race.

And this, indeed, is the meaning of progress in history. For history is a confluence of many streams, bringing together conflicting cults and cultures, conflicting national values and ideals; and those who can find peaceful solutions of these problems of conflict are the true heroes of history. They are men who blend and fuse diverse lines of development in history, and diverse conflicting types in that vast national type. Such are the heroes of peace, heroes of synthesis and unification.

This greatness of synthesis is the greatness of Raja Rammohun Roy, and we commend him to the consideration over in our minds, again, the conflict is to be resolved by him, and his solution or re-solution of it is the great problem of our life.

The period in which the Raja Rammohun Roy lived was perhaps, the darkest age in Indian history. The old society and polity had crumbled and a new one had not yet been built in its place. The old order was gone. All the vital limbs of society were paralysed. The old institutions and schools, village and town, were in a state of decay. trade, law and administration were in a state of confusion. An all-round reconstitution and reconstruction was needed. The continued existence of social life was in jeopardy.



be the principle of organisation? For, there were three bodies of culture, three civilisations, which were in conflict,—the Hindu, the Moslem, and the Christian or Occidental; and the question was,—how to find a point of *rappor*t, of concord, of unity, among these heterogeneous, hostile and warring forces. The origin of Modern India lay there.

A Prophet  
of coming  
Humanity.

The Raja by his finding of this point of concord and convergence became the Father and Patriarch of Modern India,—an India with a composite nationality and a synthetic civilisation; and by the lines of convergence he laid down, as well as by the type of personality he developed in and through his own experiences, he pointed the way to the solution of the larger problem of international culture and civilisation in human history, and became a precursor, an archetype, a prophet of coming Humanity. He laid the foundation of the true League of Nations in a League of National Cultures.

#### FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

Let us see how many such cultures, old and new, went to his making. Siva and Vishnu both watched over his cradle as his ancestral tutelary deities on the maternal and paternal sides. But it was Islamic culture, the culture of Baghdad and Bassora [Basra], filtered through an Indian Madrassa, that first woke the boy's mind. Euclidean Geometry, the categories of Porphyry's Logic through the Arabic 'Mantiq', lyrical raptures of Persian 'ghazals' felt in the blood, though but dimly apprehended at the time, first opened his mind's eye. And thus did Aflaton (Plato) and Aristu (Aristotle) of Old Greece visit the Brahmin boy in an Arabic guise.

Islamic  
Culture.

The foundations of his studies in Persian and Arabic were thus laid at Patna, and he grew up in later years to be a 'zabardast Maulavi', wise with the wisdom of Quran Sharif, learned in Mohammadan Law and Jurisprudence, and versed in the polemics of all the 63 schools of Mohammadan Theology.

And it must never be forgotten that the free thought and universalistic outlook of the Mohammadan rationalists (the Mutaza'lis of the 8th century), and the Mohammadan Unitarians (the Muwahhidin) were among the most powerful of the formative influences on the Raja's mental growth. And some of his early tracts on monotheistic and anti-idolatrous worship appear to have been written in Persian.

Brahmanic  
Culture.

Several years after his first introduction to Persian and Arabic letters came his acquaintance with Sanskrit, which gave him the key to the treasures of his inherited Brahmanic culture. It is needless to say that he lived to be a master of the whole of Brahmanical literature, with the exception of the Vedic *Samhitas*, of which he probably never made a deep study, and of which he was inclined to give a symbolical interpretation, considering the Vedic deities to be allegorical personifications

of the infinite attributes and activities of God. He was a very careful student of Hindu *Smṛiti*, including Law, Jurisprudence, and Social Institutions, of the *Darsanas* or systems of Philosophy including the *Mīmāṃsā*, and of the entire body of religious literature, including the *Brahmanas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas*, and the *Tantras*. But it was the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma Sūtras* with Sankara's commentary, and the *Gita*,—in other words, the three canonical *Vedānta Sāstras*, the *Prasathanatraya*,—that most deeply influenced him, and shaped his personal religion and his philosophy of life.

He had also studied, with sufficient care for the purposes of personal valuation, the Jaina scriptures and the Buddhist traditions in the *Mahayana* Version; but both of these he knew more through his travels and personal contacts than through closest studies. He was also familiar with the cults, practices and doctrines (and probably also the literatures) of the various fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century religious movements, the Kabir-panthis, the Nanak-panthis, the Dadu-panthis, and the Ramayat sects of Northern India. As a Monotheist he claimed fraternity with these brethren of the great Northern monotheistic faiths and cults.

It was long after this, when he was holding a subordinate post in a Collector's office in North Bengal, that he acquired the elements of English. After several years of hesitation and lukewarm interest, he now concentrated his great linguistic powers on this object. His aim was to study this New Learning from the West, and the social, political and scientific culture embodied in it. His ardent curiosity was roused by the two great contemporary movements, the American Independence and the First French Revolution, of which he had learnt from Mr. Digby, the Collector, and his studies were directed to the literature of Rationalism in Religion and Liberty in Politics. He accordingly cultivated the literature of empirical philosophy and scientific thought from Bacon to Locke and Newton, as well as the propaganda of free thinking and 'Illumination' in Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Volney, Tom Paine and others among the Coryphaei of Rationalism and Neo-theo-philanthropy. He drank eagerly from the fountain-head of modern freedom and was inspired by the spirit of the Age of Illumination. These studies only confirmed him in his rejection of miracle, dogma and ritual, to which he had already been led by his own reflections on the religions and scriptures of his country as well as by the teachings of the *Mutazilas*, the *Sufis*, and the *Uttar Mimāṃsā*. In fact, he became sceptically minded as to the claims of all 'Sāstras' and all historical religions. But the first effects of the heady wine gradually passed, and the deeper draughts of the Vedānta brought him back to the world and world-history.

Jaina  
Scriptures  
and  
Buddhist  
Traditions.

The New  
Learning  
from the  
West.

Deeper  
view  
97

Christian  
and  
Semitic  
Culture.

It was after this that in discussions with the Christian Missionaries of Serampore his mind was directed to the claims of Christianity. Now began his close reading of the Bible, and he mastered Hebrew, Syriac and Greek, and studied not merely the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, but also the Talmud, the Tarjums and the Syriac versions, not merely for exegetical purposes, but with a view to tracing the development of Jewish and Christian doctrines, and to lay the foundations of Comparative Religion. In the course of his theological polemics, he investigated not only the origin and development of *Christian* dogma and rites in the standard Church histories with special reference to the Arian, the Sabellian and the Pelagian Controversies, but also the movement of liberal thought and ethical rationalism in the Rabbinical writings of the first century before Christ, especially in reference to the Tarjums of Jonathan and Hillel. Thus the Raja's mind was enriched with the highest and best in Semitic culture in both the Hebraic and Arabic traditions, and, above all, he imbibed in an unbiased spirit the Christian culture, which he traced to a blend of a Hebraic stock with Greek, Roman and heathen grafts. But true to his first initiation, he always maintained against the missionaries that modern Western civilisation had another basis besides the composite Christian tradition. This was the scientific and economic basis which he traced to the Advancement of Science and the application of scientific knowledge to arts, industries and machinery for the expansion of man's prerogative and power over Nature,—a movement associated with the Baconian revolution in the seventeenth century. In later life he more and more directed his studies from doctrines to institutions, and his efforts from Polemics to Reform; and with the help of economic, juristic and political literature, he made a comparative study of social institutions with the same easy mastery that he had shown in the comparative study of religions.

Such were the strands of culture that went to the making of that composite web, the Raja's mind. But these were only the external landmarks in that mental history. I will now briefly trace that inner history itself. Fortunately, the materials are extant, and shed a clear light on the main stages of his mental development.

### THE INNER HISTORY

Revolt  
against  
Polytheism.

He began, as we have seen, with a revolt against polytheism and idolatry while he was yet in his teens. As yet it was the onslaught of truth against what he considered to be untruth, of reason against delusion and error. This puritanic iconoclastic fervour led to his exile from home and his perilous journey to the Himalayan tracts, in the course of which he even crossed

over into Tibet. He wrote Persian tracts; he may have also employed the Vernacular, but this is not certain.

His early travels seemed to have widened his mental outlook. Several facts impressed him,—the superstitious practices into which the religious cults had degenerated, the bigotry and mutual hate of the sectaries, who were more concerned in defending those superstitions than the essentials of faith, and the priestcraft that he thought was at the bottom of all these religious schisms and corruptions. When he was about 30 years of age, he seems to have studied the writings of the Rationalists and Free-thinkers, certainly the Muwahhidins, the Sufis and the Mutazilas, and, perhaps, also the speculations of Hume, Voltaire and Volney. Like the redoubted champion of freedom that he was, he gave battle to all the so-called historical scriptures and scriptural religions of the world, and blew a long blast of defiance in his Arabic-Persian pamphlet, the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, his *Gift to the Believers in the One God*. He divides mankind, in Voltaire's (and Volney's) fashion, into four classes,—those who deceive, those who are deceived, those who both deceive and are deceived, and those who are neither deceivers nor deceived. In this work, the influence of Locke and Hume may, perhaps, be traced in his analysis of the causes of superstition and its prevalence, an analysis which gives greater importance to psychological factors than to historical ones. But as yet he believed in the central core of true religion, the existence of a Creator and Moral Governor, and the existence of a spiritual principle in the soul. Everything else in the religions of the world is non-essential, and often, indeed, a false and impure accretion to this central core of truth.

Study  
of the  
Free-  
thinkers.

But his free-thinking did not stop here. He seems at this time to have read deeper in the six *Darsanas* (especially the *Purva Mimamsa*) on the one hand, and in Hume and the Free-Thinkers on the other. He had doubts as to the creation of the world, and speculated on the eternity of matter, and the self-sufficiency of Nature and Nature's Laws to maintain the course of the world.

#### STUDIES IN THE VEDANTA

But at this time he was also pursuing his studies in the Vedanta. The Philosophy of the "*Brahma Sutras*" as expounded by Sankara seems to have met his doubts and difficulties. He rested in the concept of Brahma, emphasising the *Nirguna* equally with the *Saguna*, the transcendental equally with the immanental aspect. *Saguna Brahma*, or, more precisely, the *Maya* of *Saguna Brahma*, is the origin and locus (*asraya*) of all phenomenal existence (*Prapancha*). What is *Maya* in *Saguna Brahma* is *Avidya* or Nescience in *Jiva*. The process of creation, which is a beginningless process, may, therefore, be described as *Vikshepa*, an ejection of *Maya*, or, from the *Jiva's* point of view,

The  
nature of  
Brahma.

an *Avarana*, or veiling (adumbration) by *Avidya*, resulting in the *Jiva's* perception of the world as an appearance superimposed on the one absolute reality, as a snake may be superimposed on a rope by hallucination. But the *Jiva* takes this *Mayic* world to be real, an independent entity, Matter or Nature set over against *Chit* (intelligence) as a duality. This is the *Jiva's* illusion, and it lasts until there is *Brahm-atm-aikya-jnana*, the intuition of the Oneness, when *Maya* ceases for that individual *Jiva*. All this explains the relation of the *Jiva*, *Maya* and *Prapancha* (the world) to the *Saguna Brahma* (the immanent aspect of God), but God in his reality is not conditioned by *Maya*. *Brahma* is not touched by the limitations and imperfections of *Maya*, the suffering and sin of the world; and hence *Brahma*, the one Reality, is *Nirguna*. The world, on the other hand, indeed the very *Saguna* aspect of *Brahma*, is not an absolute reality (*Paramarthic Satta*), but has only a relative existence; in other words, an existence for and through the *Jiva*, lasting only until *Jnana*, the intuition of the Oneness, and simultaneously with it, *Moksha*, or liberation, from the illusory bondage of separateness, are realised. But for this very attainment, the individual, *Jiva*, must go through a certain process. He must accept this world as a *Vyavaharika* sphere of existence for his practice and discipline. The Laws of Nature (or the Universe) are God's own laws, and man's duty in the world consists in obeying these laws. The destiny of the soul is to become one with God and this union can be effected by *Jnana*, or the intuition of the Oneness,—an intuition that comes, not by inferential or conceptual knowledge, but only in *Samadhi*, when the heart is purified by the discipline of work and worship, and illumined by *Dhyana* (Meditation) and *Yoga* (Communion).

But two points stand out clearly in his exposition. He insisted on *Upasana*, the duty of meditation and worship, as well as on ethical duties (*Nishkama Karma*), as obligatory, till the realisation of *Moksha* (Liberation); and to the knower of the *Brahma*, he gave the option of *Karma* (*Nishkama Karma*) or *Akarma*, and equally of being an *Asrami* or an *Anasrami*. In these respects, it would be correct to say that the Raja's *Brahma-vidya* comprehended *Visishtadvaita* and *Dvaita* in his attitude towards the world and the individual soul. His emphasis on *Isvara* made his Monism synthetic, concrete and practical.

#### THE FOUNDATION OF HIS FAITH

He went on developing this philosophy more and more with his studies in the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras*. But he did not stop there. Simultaneously with the restoration of his theistic faith came a new view of the meaning and purpose of scriptural authority. He declared that the light of individual reason had to be reconciled with the authority of the scripture, as repositories of the collective wisdom of the race. Neither

His  
Exposition  
of the  
Vedanta.

Reconci-  
liation  
of Reason  
and  
Scripture.

INSCRIPTION ON THE RAJA'S TOMB, ARNO'S VALE,  
BRISTOL.

Beneath this stone rest the remains of

RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY BAHADUR

A conscientious and steadfast believer in the  
unity of the Godhead.

He consecrated his life with entire devotion to  
the worship of the Divine Spirit alone.

To great natural talents he united a thorough  
mastery of many languages,  
and early distinguished himself as one of the  
greatest scholars of the day.

His unwearied labours to promote the social,  
moral and physical condition of the people of India,  
his earnest endeavours to suppress idolatry and  
the rite of Suttee, and his constant zealous advocacy  
of whatever tended to advance the glory of God  
and the welfare of man, live in the grateful remem-  
brance of his countrymen.

This tablet

records the sorrow and pride with which  
his memory is cherished by his descendants.  
He was born in Radhanagar, in Bengal 1774,  
and died at Bristol, September 27th, 1833.



reason nor authority is sufficient for the guidance of life, in the uncertainties and weaknesses of man's moral and intellectual equipment; and the reconciliation of the two can alone furnish such guidance as is available to man.

Rammohun Roy had now come to the bed-rock, the lasting foundation of his faith and practice.

His next discovery was a momentous one. He had by this time made a comprehensive study of three scriptures in the original,—the Hindu, the Moslem, and the Christian,—and he found that the core of religious truth, comprehending the Unity of God as Spirit, his worship in spirit and in truth, the immortality of the soul, and ethical discipline as the basis of spiritual life, formed the central teaching of the canonical scriptures of the historic religions. There was only one Theism, with certain historical varieties, e.g., a Hindu Theism, an Islamic Theism, and a Christian Theism, each variety being centred round a particular scripture,—whether it was the Veda and Vedanta, the Qoran, or the Bible. Of these, Islam and Christianity centred round one historic Prophet or Divine Exemplar, while Hindu Theism had no fixed and single historic centre, being associated with a series of divine teachers or exemplars such as Rama, Krishna, or Siva as the Gurn. Each had also its characteristic initiation and ritual, and its characteristic symbols, these being dependent on geographical, climatic and ethnic factors.

Thus he had been brought by his pioneer studies in Comparative Religion to Universalism,—and, what is more, to a Universal scripture, a Universal authority as underlying all historic scriptures and all historic authorities. He had proceeded from the sweeping negation of his *Tuhfat-ul-Murcahhidin* to the universalistic position of his prefaces to the Vedanta abridgement and translations.

From Comparative Religion to Universalism.

But he now perceived that the universal Truth was stressed in different ways, had different accents in its different historic utterances. The Vedanta, which had restored him to faith, he always considered as strongest in *Jnana*, the knowledge of the Unity of all souls and of the world in Brahma; Islam, which had given him his early iconoclastic zeal, he considered as strongest in the sense of divine government, and a militant equality of man with man; and Christianity, which gave him the divine exemplar, he considered as strongest in ethical and social guidance to peace and happiness in the path of life.

Thus his Universalism in Religion passed on to a historic synthesis which was distinguished from eclecticism in two ways. First, none of these religions was only *a part of* the truth; each in its pristine purity was *the* truth, specially and ethnically expressed or embodied. Secondly, each in his view was to preserve its historic or traditional continuity, though each was to

A Historic Synthesis.



grow by mutual contact and assimilation, and by convergence to a common ideal.

## TWO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Creeds and  
Councils.

But here he was confronted with two difficult questions.—  
(1) What about the vast growth of non-canonical religious literature, and creeds and councils, which had overgrown the simple original truths of scripture in every country and tradition?

The Raja had an uncompromising answer: These later growths, for the most part, are the outcome of degeneration or corruption, due partly to priest-craft or king-craft, partly to psychological working of man's mind, and partly to social causes. The Raja lived before the concept of Evolution had been applied to human history; and, with most religious reformers, he appealed to an original purity of doctrine and practice, and saw no progressive revelation in the various historic churches or ecclesiastical organisations and codes.

(2) What about the rituals, practices and symbols of the different religions?

The Raja would allow rituals, but he desired simplicity, and he insisted that they must be of social character, and not *Tamasic*, i.e., not anti-social and destructive of social happiness or social purity, as was the case with many of the rituals of his own countrymen, which he condemned. Similarly, the symbols must be adequate to express the truth, and must not adumbrate, darken, or degrade it.

Rituals and  
Symbols.

His early prejudice against rituals and symbols as such was based on his perception that they frequently darken the truth and the mind's capacity for the truth. Moreover, they tend to enslave the mind by becoming rigid and formal. In his later Bengali writings he perceives their legitimate uses, provided that there is spontaneous, free, and varied activity in the creation of new symbols and new rituals of the right sort, so that they may serve the spirit and help to free it. But to the end he, as a Vedantist, retained his strong objection to *Pratikopasana* or the use of artifacts as images of God in the ritual of monotheistic worship.

## ONE THEISTIC FRATERNITY

It is only necessary to add that not only did he include Hindu, Moslem and Christian Theists in one theistic fraternity as brothers in faith; he extended this fellowship and co-operation to those, who, by whatever name, would acknowledge some Principle of the Universe, the need of meditation on that Principle as good, and the love and service of Man as the guiding principle of the conduct of life. Buddhists and Jainas and believers in a Law of Nature, he would, therefore, acknowledge as not against the theistic fraternity, but with it.

When he was thus laying the theoretical foundations of his philosophy and practice of Religion, he came into conflict with the Pandits, Maulavis and Padres of the day; and this led him to a line of thought and activity that ended in that richer synthesis of Personality, which marks him out as the precursor and prophet of a coming type of Humanity.

In these religious controversies he had to defend the original Hinduism, Islam and Christianity against champions of orthodoxy in each of these churches or religious communities. He had also to defend Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, each, against the attacks of the champions of the other two. He found that this would be possible only on the following basis:—

(1) First, each of the historic religions must be shown to be in the pure pristine form free from all the elements of bitter hate, fanatical jealousy, and ignorant zealotry, which had been adventitiously introduced in their later history.

Pristine forms of Historic Religions.

The Raja found that the love of man as man was declared to be the authentic expression of the love of God,—in Hinduism, in Islam, as well as in Christianity. Respect for the soul as soul, with freedom of conscience and toleration as corollaries, is of the essence of all true religion. But he insisted that toleration is limited by the principle of respect for life; and religious practices which violate that principle, or corrupt social morality, must be put down by the State.

(2) Secondly, all religions, ethnic or credal, all religions by which masses of men have lived as social aggregates, must be recognised as moving along their own lines of historic tradition to a universal ideal or centre of convergence. That ideal is the ideal of Universal Religion. To put the Raja's implications in the terms of our own age, this is not a static ideal, but a developing ideal, and as the different religions in the course of their own forward march approach one another and approach the common centre more and more, the centre of convergence itself shifts or moves forwards; so that the ideal always remains an ideal, beckoning ever forward and upward to the infinitudes and beatitudes of God.

The Ideal of Universal Religion.

It is not, therefore, necessary to assume that the great historic religions, these national embodiments of universalism, will cease or be merged one in another, apart from the question of the historic fusions of the nations themselves. From the Raja's point of view, therefore, the evolution of Internationality, Super-nationality, or even the Universal State, does not necessarily mean that differences or variations of nationality will cease to exist, and it is not at all necessary that any of the historic religions will merge in another. But each of the great national or historic religions will grow fuller and fuller by mutual contact and assimilation, as well as by ideal convergence; they will grow, however, along their own lines of historic continuity as specific embodiments of a common Universal

Regulation, even as the different ethnic types or nationalities will go on evolving as specific embodiments of Universal Humanity in specific natural and historical environments.

Social  
Usages and  
Religion.

(3) Thirdly, wherever religious authority has stereotyped social usages and customs, *e.g.*, by regulation of food and drink, marriage, personal law, and economic or political institutions, the first step must be to secure their freedom from such religious trammels and place them on their only sound basis, the principle of utility or the happiness of the greatest number. Every sphere of human interest, all the sciences and arts, must be autonomous, and as such ruled only by the Natural laws pertaining to their respective domains. And religion will be there only to co-ordinate these various spheres and activities by its one guiding principle and goal, *Lokasreyas*, or the Universal good. The progressive convergence of the national religions is possible only on this fundamental assumption; and Hindu *Smriti*, Moslem *Shariat*, and Christian Canonical Law must, in fulfilment of their own basic religious principles, adapt themselves to the revelations of God's own truth in Science and the Laws of Nature and Society.

If these are the working assumptions on which alone the future of India, and, in fact, the future of Humanity, is possible, the Raja made them clear and concrete, made them practical, in his efforts as a triple reformer, the true promulgator of Hindu, Moslem and Christian religious reform.

#### THE CENTRE OF UNIVERSAL CONVERGENCE

The  
Brahmo  
Samaj.

In the interest of the solidarity of religions from the social point of view, he founded the Brahmo Samaj as a Society of the worshippers of the one God of all religions and all Humanity. By the declarations in the Trust Deed, the Brahmo Samaj was to be only a meeting house and congregation for the worship of the one Universal God. The worshippers might belong each to his own religious fold, Saivaite or Vaishnavite, Smarta or Vedantist,—in theory, he might be Christian or Moslem, Jew or Jaina,—anybody could join in the prayers, and no one was expected to depart from his own religious tradition, *Sampradaya*, or church. The ruling idea was that a man might be Hindu, Moslem, Christian, Jew, Jaina or Buddhist, and yet join in communion with brethren of other faiths in order that such common worship and prayer might strengthen their perception of the religious traditions to move, more surely and more truly, towards the centre of universal convergence. In actual practice, no doubt, the congregation in the Raja's Brahmo Samaj was a congregation of Hindu Theists, using the rituals and symbols of that particular type of Theism; for public worship must be embodied in some concrete form. But the governing idea was to strengthen the social solidarity of the religions of the day. That idea, for its fulfilment, required that



Was he all things to all men? The explanation is simple. This was Raja Rammohun Roy, the Nationalist Reformer, bearing not one, but three standards at the same time for three different hosts who had taken the field against one another. Some of his controversial writings for this particularist propaganda were written under the names of his disciples, though the secret was an open one. Others were written in his own name. His defence of Christianity against Hinduism, and of Hinduism against Christianity, can be easily explained on this basis, though they have been stumbling blocks to some. More wonderful still, he defends Christianity as he conceived it against the Missionaries, and in so doing he accepts unreservedly the authority of the Christian Scriptures. He accepts whatever authority is claimed in and for the Christian Bible as God's own truth; he argues as a Christian, and, by collation of texts and the application of the acknowledged canons of scriptural interpretation, he finds the purest Universal Religion as the precious truth taught in these Scriptures. So with Islam; so with the Hindu Sastras; and so would he have done doubtless with Buddhism and Jainism. And yet in playing so many parts he kept his personality intact and integral. These were but satellites that revolved round a central majestic orb, and were ruled by that orb.

His  
Personal  
Religion.

Thirdly, he could combine in his personal religion the fundamental Hindu, Christian and Islamic experiences. He transvalued all these values, and he made them integral to his own valuation of life. In truth, he practised the discipline of Yoga, the discipline of the Moshayak (the lover of God), and the discipline of the Christian Saint. Thus he was multi-personal in a true sense of the term. These historic cults and cultures had been fused in one discipline of Universal Humanity in his soul. History has many centres; and he, an epitome of History, had a poly-centric personality. But the centre of centres in himself was beyond them all. That centre was his experience of communion with Brahma, the Absolute, in *Samadhi*, wherein he could unify all partial experiences. He thus showed how Universal Humanity in future may realise in individual synthesis of life (and *Sadhana*) the disciplines of the great historic religions. It is as certain as anything in man's future history can be, that the future will see a rapprochement of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Vedantism,—not a 'melange', not one concrete Universal Religion,—but world-redactions of each of these religions under mutual contact and assimilation. In this respect the Raja is a prophet and precursor of coming Humanity.

The  
Humanist—  
pure and  
simple.

Fourthly, there was another Rammohun Roy behind these masks, the man unmasked, the Humanist pure and simple, watching from his conning-tower the procession of Universal Humanity in Universal History. To him, all mysteries were

unveiled, and all idols broken. He was the peer of the Voltaire and the Volneys, the Diderots and the Herders across the seas; and he had seen and travelled beyond them all, a modern Ulysses, voyaging in the land of the setting sun, and descending—not once, not twice, but many times—into the dark under-world, to bring messages from the old prophets in the Night of Ages.

### FROM POLEMICS TO REFORM

Such were the theoretical foundations of the Raja's synthesis of the three cultures that were in conflict at the origin of Modern India. But, as I have already noted, in the later stage his mind turned more and more from theory to practice, from doctrines to institutions, from polemics to reform. But here also his was a synthetic type of personality. His greatness was in the fact that he was a theoretician and practitioner in one, an outstanding exception to the verdict of the philosophical historian that would keep apart for ever the man of theory and the man of practice. For the Raja was at once a born theoretician and a born practitioner. He based his reforms, social or political, agrarian or industrial, on a criticism of social life, on ulterior postulates and concepts, in which he effected a synthesis between the East and the West. His synthesis of the

His  
Reforms—  
Synthesis  
between  
East and  
West.

The East had placed the group above the individual in social organisation, and the individual above all social bonds in the quest of the *summum bonum*. The West had stressed the claims of the individual in social polity, and of the social good in the Kingdom of God. The Raja held that individual progress is the touchstone as well as the measuring rod of social progress; but the individual's progress could be secured only by organising and establishing the conditions of social progress. Accordingly in practical ethics, the golden rule, the rule of individual reciprocity, was for him the guiding principle of conduct; but at the same time he found the inner moral life in the higher discipline of the soul, the ideal of *Nishkama Karma*, work with dispassion, in the terms of the Gita. In social polity, he emphasised the natural rights of man, which would include the rights not only to life and property, but also to freedom of speech, opinion, conscience and association. And Law must secure to each individual his natural rights so far as they can be secured with-

The  
Touch-  
stone  
of Social  
Progress.

out infringement of the equal rights of others. But he spoke oftener in terms of happiness than of rights, and avoided the fallacious view of a positive social contract as constitutive of society. Accordingly, he held that legislation, while aiming at the establishment of natural rights, must subordinate this criterion to the practical quest of the greatest happiness, or the happiness of the greatest number; and social reform, while pursuing the ideals of individualistic justice and equality, must be dominated by the principle of *Lokasreyas*, or the common good. And true to the spirit of the East and the genius of India, he elevated these principles to the sphere of *Dharma* or duty, and thus brought his humanitarian religion as a motive power to the organisation of social polity.

### IN THE SPHERE OF STATE POLITY

Fusion  
of the  
Modern and  
Mediæval.

Similarly, the history of Indian civilisation taught him many other things of fundamental importance; e.g., in the sphere of State polity, an original separation between the legislative and the executive function; in the sphere of Jurisprudence, the origin of Law in Custom and *Achāra* as co-ordinate with the sovereign's command, and, often, as ratified *ex post facto* by such command and sanction; and in the sphere of juridical as well as revenue administration, the pivotal character of the village and its *Panchayat*, and of the ryot's tenure and ownership of land. But he gave a modern meaning and purpose to these ancient and mediæval elements of Indian polity. He went on to link them up with Representative Government, trial by jury, and freedom of the Press, and he corrected and completed the Hindu's personal law of marriage, inheritance, religious worship, women's status, *Stri-dhana*, and *Varnasrama-dharma*, by introducing the most liberal principles of justice and equity, for which he found sanction also in the old codes, thus working out a synthesis between Eastern and Western social values and postulates, against the common background of Universal Humanity. But it was not only the jurisprudence of the New Polity, it was also the modern scientific civilization of the West, that he wanted to plant on Asiatic soil; and, accordingly, he helped to establish public education in India on the basis of real and useful knowledge, more particularly of Science, and the application of science to industry. Similarly, he avoided the fallacy of the Physiocratic economists in pitting agriculture against manufacture; he would preserve the *ryotwari* agrarian and rural basis of the Indian civilisation, while he would plant on this soil modern scientific industry to improve the standard of living, and therewith the health and physique of the Indian people. And, finally, he made a forecast of the future political history of India and her relation to Great Britain on Plantation (or Colonial) lines. Indeed, he would even welcome high-grade

Advocate of  
Modern  
Education.

European settlements in certain parts of the country as a tentative measure to hasten this consummation. And in the end there came to this prophet of Humanity on his death-bed the vision of a free, puissant and enlightened India, the civiliser and enlightener of Asiatic nationalities, a golden link between the Far East and the Far West, a vision as emblematic of the past, as it was prophetic of the future history of Humanity.

His vision  
of Future  
India.

### THREE MAXIMS OF THE RAJA

—Three maxims in politics, in ethics, and in religion the Raja often repeated :

(1) The first he expressed in an Arabic sentence, *Insan abid ul ihsan* ( " Man is the slave of benefits " ).

(2) The second, a couplet from the Anwar Suheili: " The enjoyment of two worlds (this and the next ) rests on these two points—kindness to friends, civility to enemies ".

(3) The third, from the philosophic Sa'di, which he often repeated, and often expressed a wish to have inscribed on his tomb: " The true way of serving God is to do good to man ".

SANDFORD ARNOT

*in the "Athenæum Journal", London, 1833.*



From the Rajah's own collection "Key  
to the Palace, the Court of  
the East, Heptameron - Green  
near Bristol

Dear Madam

I hope your & your friends  
are all well from health & etc.

I beg your acceptance  
of the accompanying volume  
containing a series of accounts  
written by Dr. Theobald  
which I prize very highly.

I also beg your will  
to be ever by sending to the  
author, Theobald, for further  
information.

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER WRITTEN  
WHILE IN LONDON



*Copy of a letter from the Rajah Rammohun Ray to  
Miss Kiddell, the aunt of Miss Castle,  
Stapleton Grove, near Bristol.*

“Dear Madam,—I hope you and your friends are not worse from keeping late hours. I beg your acceptance of the accompanying volume, containing a series of sermons preached by Dr. Channing, which I prize very highly.

“I also beg you will oblige me by rendering the small pamphlet published by a friend, acceptable to Miss Castle. Being averse to induce her to write a letter of thanks for such a trifling present, I have refrained from sending it directly to Miss Castle. Had I not been engaged to a dinner party to-day, I would have made another trial of Miss Rutt’s generosity this afternoon. I will endeavour to pay you a short visit between the hours of ten and twelve, should you be at home.

I remain,  
Yours very sincerely,  
RAMMOHUN ROY.

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## APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX—A

### RAMMOHUN ROY ON INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

The three letters printed below were unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, who is well-known for his researches among old State Records, and published by him, for the first time, in The Modern Review for October, 1928. In the communication to the Foreign Minister of France, the reader will find an enunciation of the principle and a clear statement of the programme for a Comity of Nations. Rammohun's belief in the unity of mankind, stressed by Rabindranath Tagore in his Presidential Address at the Preliminary Meeting of the Centenary, receives a fresh illustration in this communication. His was a mind that would give shape to an idea as soon as it was conceived.

—Editor.

#### I

To

T. HYDE VILLIERS, Esq.,

Secretary to the India Board.

SIR,

India having providentially been placed under the care of the Board of Control, I feel necessarily induced to have recourse to that authority when occasion requires. I, therefore, hope you will excuse the intrusion I make with the following lines.

I am informed that for the purpose of visiting France it is necessary to be provided with a passport and that before granting it, the French Ambassador must be furnished with an account of the applicant.

Such restrictions against foreigners are not observed even among the Nations of Asia (China excepted). However, their observance by France may, perhaps, be justified on the ground that she is surrounded by Governments entirely hostile to these ideas and by nations kept down merely by the bayonet or by religious division.

In the event of my applying to British Legation for a passport I beg to know whether I shall be justified in referring to you in my official capacity as to my character. In that I can say for myself is, that I am a traveller and that my heart is with the French people in their endeavours to support the cause of liberal principles.

RAMMOHUN ROY .

Sir Francis Burdett, at Mr. Byng's, liberally and spontaneously offered to give me a letter of introduction to General Lafayette, but this will not, I think, serve my purpose on my first landing in France.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
RAMMOHUN ROY.

LONDON,  
48, Bedford Sq.  
*Decr. 22nd, 1831.*

II

To  
HYDE VILLIERS, ESQ.,  
*Secretary to Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India.*

SIR,

I have the honour to receive your letter of the 27th instant and I beg to offer my warm acknowledgements to the Board for their attention to my application of the 23rd of this month.

I beg to be permitted to add that, as I intimated to the Board my intention of eventually applying to the French Ambassador resident in London for a passport for France, I now deem it proper to submit to you, for the information of the Board, a copy of an intended communication from me to the Foreign Minister of France, the result of which I shall await before I apply to the French Ambassador.

Unless I have the honor to hear from you that such an address would be irregular and unconstitutional, I shall forward it to a friend in Paris to be presented in due form.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
RAMMOHUN ROY.

LONDON,  
*December 28th, 1831*  
(Endorsed)  
*28th December, 1831*  
RAJAH RAMMOHUN ROY.

Transg. copy of an intended communication to the Foreign Minister of France.

III

To  
THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FRANCE,  
PARIS.

SIR,

You may be surprised at receiving a letter from a Foreigner, the Native of a country situated many thousand miles from France, and I assuredly would not now have trespassed on your attention, were I

not induced by a sense of what I consider due to myself and by the respect I feel towards a country standing in the foremost rank of free and civilized nations.

2nd. For twelve years past I have entertained a wish (as noticed, I think, in several French and English Periodicals) to visit a country so favoured by nature and so richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and above all blessed by the possession of a free constitution. After surmounting many difficulties interposed by religious and national distinctions and other circumstances, I am at last opposite your coast, where, however, I am informed that I must not place my foot on your territory unless I previously solicit and obtain an express permission for my entrance from the Ambassador or Minister of France in England.

3rd. Such a regulation is quite unknown even among the Nations of Asia (though extremely hostile to each other from religious prejudices and political dissensions), with the exception of China, a country noted for its extreme jealousy of foreigners and apprehensions of the introduction of new customs and ideas. I am, therefore, quite at a loss to conceive how it should exist among a people so framed as the French are for courtesy and liberality in all other matters.

4th. *It is now generally admitted that not religion only but unbiassed common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race. [The italics are ours.—Ed.]*

5th. It may perhaps be urged that during the existence of war and hostile feelings between any two nations (arising probably from their not understanding their real interests), policy requires of them to adopt these precautions against each other. This, however, only applies to a state of warfare. If France, therefore, were at war with surrounding nations or regarded their people as dangerous, the motive for such an extraordinary precaution might have been conceived.

6th. But as a general peace has existed in Europe for many years, and there is more particularly so harmonious an understanding between the people of France and England and even between their present Governments, I am utterly at a loss to discover the cause of a regulation which manifests, to say the least, a want of cordiality and confidence on the part of France.

7th. Even during peace the following excuses might perhaps be offered for the continuance of such restrictions, though in my humble opinion they cannot stand a fair examination.

First. If it be said that persons of bad character should not be allowed to enter France: still it might, I presume, be answered that the granting of passports by the French Ambassador here is not usually founded on certificates of character or investigation into the conduct



of individuals. Therefore, it does not provide a remedy for that supposed evil.

Secondly. If it be intended to prevent felons escaping from justice: this case seems well-provided for by the treaties between different nations for the surrender of all criminals.

Thirdly. If it be meant to obstruct the flight of debtors from their creditors: in this respect likewise it appears superfluous, as the bankrupt laws themselves after a short imprisonment set the debtor free even in his own country; therefore voluntary exile from his own country would be, I conceive, a greater punishment.

Fourthly. If it be intended to apply to political matters, it is in the first place not applicable to my case. *But on general grounds I beg to observe that it appears to me, the ends of constitutional government might be better attained by submitting every matter of political difference between two countries to a Congress composed of an equal number from the Parliament of each: the decision of the majority to be acquiesced in by both nations and the Chairman to be chosen by each Nation alternately, for one year, and the place of meeting to be one year within the limits of one country and next within those of the other; such as at Dover and Calais for England and France.*

8th. *By such a Congress all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the Natives of any two civilized countries with constitutional Governments, might be settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings might be preserved between them from generation to generation. [The italics are ours.—Ed.]*

9th. I do not dwell on the inconvenience which the system of passports imposes in urgent matters of business and in cases of domestic affliction. But I may be permitted to observe that the mere circumstance of applying for a passport seems a tacit admission that the character of the applicant stands in need of such a certificate or testimonial before he can be permitted to pass unquestioned. Therefore, any one may feel some delicacy in exposing himself to the possibility of a refusal which would lead to an inference unfavourable to his character as a peaceable citizen.

My desire, however, to visit that country is so great that I shall conform to such conditions as are imposed on me, if the French Government, after taking the subject into consideration judge it proper and expedient to continue restrictions contrived for a different state of things, but to which they may have become reconciled by long habit: as I should be sorry to set up my opinion against that of the present enlightened Government of France.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
RAMMOHUN ROY.

## APPENDIX—B

### AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.\*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with the wish, you have frequently expressed, that I should give an outline of my life, I have now the pleasure to give you the following very brief sketch.

My ancestors were Brahmins of a high order, and, from time immemorial, were devoted to the religious duties of their race, down to my fifth progenitor, who about one hundred and forty years ago gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits and aggrandisement. His descendants ever since followed his example, and, according to the usual fate of courtiers, with various success, sometimes rising to honour and sometimes falling; sometimes rich and sometimes poor; sometimes excelling in success, sometimes miserable through disappointment. But my maternal ancestors, being of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth, and of a family than which none holds a higher rank in that profession, have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious observances and devotion, preferring peace and tranquillity of mind to the excitements of ambition, and all the allurements of worldly grandeur.

In conformity with the usage of my paternal race, and the wish of my father, I studied the Persian and Arabic languages, these being

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\*Miss Mary Carpenter thus introduces this Autobiographical Sketch into her book, *The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy's* (London, Trubner, 1866):—

"The following letter from Rammohun Roy himself first appeared in the [London] *Athenæum*, and in the *Literary Gazette*; from one or other of which it was copied into various English newspapers. It was written just before he went to France. It was probably designed for some distinguished person who had desired him to give an outline of his history; and he adopted this form for the purpose. The letter may be considered as addressed to his friend, Mr. Gordon of Calcutta."

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet in her *"Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy,"* (London, 1900) calls it "the spurious autobiographical letter published by Sandford Arnot in the *Athenæum* of October 5, 1833," though she does not give her reasons for the statement.

Prof. Max Müller in his *Biographical Essays* (London, 1884) writes:—

"There is a letter, supposed to have been written by Rammohun Roy shortly before he left England for France, and addressed to Mr. Gordon of Calcutta. It was first published after the Rajah's death in the *Athenæum*, Oct. 5, 1833, by Mr. Sandford Arnot, who had acted as the Rajah's Secretary during his stay in England. . . . Whether the Rajah wrote or dictated the whole of it may be doubted, but to reject the whole as a fabrication would be going much too far."

indispensable to those who attached themselves to the courts of the Mahommedan princes ; and agreeably to the usage of my maternal relations, I devoted myself to the study of the Sanskrit and the theological works written in it, which contain the body of Hindu literature, law and religion.

When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindoos. This, together with my known sentiments on that subject, having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me and restored me to his favour ; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants ; and I enjoyed the confidence of several of them even in their public capacity. My continued controversies with the Brahmins on the subject of their idolatry and superstition, and my interference with their custom of burning widows, and other pernicious practices, revived and increased their animosity against me ; and through their influence with my family, my father was again obliged to withdraw his countenance openly, though his limited pecuniary support was still continued to me.

After my father's death I opposed the advocates of idolatry with still greater boldness. Availing myself of the art of printing, now established in India, I published various works and pamphlets against their errors, in the native and foreign languages. This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three Scotch friends, to whom, and the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful.

The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to Brahminism, but to a perversion of it ; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmins was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey. Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and resistance to my opinions, several highly respectable persons, both among my own relations and others, began to adopt the same sentiments.

I now felt a strong wish to visit Europe, and obtain, by personal observation, a more thorough insight into its manners, customs, religion, and political institutions. I refrained, however, from carrying this intention into effect until the friends who coincided in my sentiments should be increased in number and strength. My expectations having been at length realised, in November, 1830, I embarked

## *AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH*

for England, as the discussion of the East India Company's charter was expected to come on, by which the treatment of the natives of India, and its future government, would be determined for many years to come, and an appeal to the King in Council, against the abolition of the practice of burning widows, was to be heard before the Privy Council; and his Majesty the Emperor of Delhi had likewise commissioned me to bring before the authorities in England certain encroachments on his rights by the East India Company. I accordingly arrived in England in April, 1831.

I hope you will excuse the brevity of this sketch, as I have no leisure at present to enter into particulars, and

I remain, etc.,

RAMMOHUN ROY.

## APPENDIX—C

### A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

[From the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Ninth Edition]

Raja Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahma Samaj or the Theistic Church of India, was born at Radhanagar, Bengal, in May, 1772, of an ancient and honourable Brahman family. His father gave him a good education; he learnt Persian at home, Arabic at Patna (where he studied Euclid, Aristotle and the Koran), and Sanskrit at Benares. Although a devout idolater in boyhood, he early began to doubt and speculate, and at fifteen left home to study Buddhism in Tibet, where his criticisms on Lama-worship gave much offence. After some years' travel he returned, but, his anti-idolatrous sentiments obliging him to leave home, he lived at Benares until his father's death in 1803. After this, he spent about ten years in the East India Company's service, latterly as Dewan or head officer in the collection of Revenues. During the period he first began to assemble his friends together for evening discussions on the absurdities of idolatry, and he also issued his first work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* ("A Gift to Monotheists"). This treatise was in Persian, with an Arabic preface, and was a bold protest against superstition and priestcraft. These proceedings brought on him much hostility, and even persecution, and in 1814 he retired to Calcutta for greater safety. Here he soon established a little Friendly Society (*Atmiya Sabha*) which met weekly to read the Hindu Scriptures and to chant Monotheistic hymns. In 1816 he translated the Vedanta into Bengali and Hindustani, following this by a series of translations from the Upanishads into Bengali, Hindustani and English, with introductions and comments of his own. These works he published at his own cost and disseminated widely among his countrymen. His writings excited much opposition and gave rise to numerous controversies, in which his ability, tact and learning rendered him fully a match for his antagonists. But the deadliest blow he inflicted upon Hindu superstition was his effective agitation against the rite of *Suttee*, the burning of living widows on the piles of their deceased husbands.

In 1811 he had been a horrified witness of this sacrifice in his elder brother's family, and he had vowed never to rest until he had uprooted this custom. He exposed the hollow pretences of its advocates in elaborate pamphlets both in Bengali and English, and pressed the matter in every possible way, till at last the tide of public feeling turned, and on December 4, 1829, Lord William Bentinck issued a regulation abolishing *Suttee* throughout all the territories subject to Fort William. Rammohun was an active politician and

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

philanthropist. He built school-houses and established schools in which useful knowledge was gratuitously taught through the medium both of the English and the native languages. He wrote a suggestive Bengali Grammar, of which he published one version in English (1826) and one in Bengali (1833). He wrote valuable pamphlets on Hindu law and made strenuous exertions for the freedom of the native Press; he also established (1822) and mainly conducted two native newspapers, the *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali, and the *Mirat-al-Akhbar* in Persian and made them the means of diffusing much useful political information. Becoming interested in Christianity he learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Bible in the original languages, and in 1820 he issued a selection from the four Gospels entitled—"The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness." This was attacked by the Baptist Missionaries of Serampur, and a long controversy ensued in which he published three remarkable "Appeals to the Christian Public" in defence of the "Precepts of Jesus". He also wrote other theological tracts (sometimes under assumed names) in which he attacked both Hindu and Christian orthodoxy with a strong hand. But his personal relations with orthodox Christians were never unfriendly, and he rendered valuable assistance to Dr. Duff in the latter's educational schemes. He also warmly befriended a Unitarian Christian Mission which was started in Calcutta (1824) by Mr. William Adam, formerly a Baptist Missionary, who, in attempting to convert Rammohun to trinitarianism was himself converted to the opposite view. This Unitarian Mission, though not a theological success, attracted considerable sympathy among the Hindu Monotheists, whose *Atmiya Sabha* had then become extinct. At last Rammohun felt able to re-embodify his cherished ideal, and on August 20, 1825, he opened the first Brahma Association (Brahma Sabha) at a hired house. A suitable church-building was then erected and placed in the hands of trustees, with a small endowment and a remarkable trust-deed by which the building was set apart "for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the universe." The new church was formally opened on the 11th *Magh* (January 23), 1830, from which day the Brahma Samaj dates its existence. Having now succeeded in his chief projects, Rammohun resolved to visit England, and the King of Delhi appointed him envoy thither on special business, and gave him the title of Raja. He arrived in England on April 8, 1831, and was received with universal cordiality and respect. He watched with special anxiety the Parliamentary discussions on the renewal of the East India Company's charter and gave much valuable evidence before the Board of Control on the condition of India. This he republished with additional suggestions ("Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India") and also reissued his important "Essay on the Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property." He visited France, and wished to visit America, but died unexpectedly of brain-fever at Bristol, September, 27, 1833.

## APPENDIX--D

### FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS OF RAMMOHUN

[By Manmatha Nath Ghosh]

Dwarkanath Tagore (1794—1846) :

Dwarkanath Tagore, or "Prince Dwarkanath" as he was often called, was born in Calcutta in 1794, and was the nephew and adopted son of Rammoney Tagore. He received his education at Mr. Sherbourne's School. At an early age he lost his adopted father and inherited a large patrimony. He at first commenced practice as a legal and commercial agent but his abilities attracted the notice of Government, and he was soon appointed Dewan to the Salt Agent and Collector of the 24 Pergannas and Dewan to the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium. Rammohun Roy largely influenced his mind, and he co-operated with the Raja in all his religious, social, political and educational reforms. He munificently supported the Brahmo Samaj from its foundation and urged the abolition of *Suttee*. He was joint proprietor with Rammohun Roy and Nil Rutton Haldar of the *Bengal Herald* and a proprietor of the *Bengal Hurkaru* and other journals, and strenuously fought for the freedom of the Press and the repeal of the "Black Act". Dwarkanath was an active supporter of the Hindu College and the Medical College, and he arranged for the training of some Indian medical students in England, himself bearing the expenses of two of them. After leaving Government service Dwarkanath founded, in 1839, the firm of Carr Tagore & Co. and also the Union Bank and the Landholders' Society. He was famous for his lavish hospitality, and Lord Auckland was a frequent guest at his garden-house, the well-known Belgatchia Villa in the suburbs of Calcutta. A man of large public and private charities, his enlightened liberality and public spirit commanded universal admiration. Government made him a Justice of the Peace and frequently consulted him on public matters. In 1842 he visited Europe—where he was cordially welcomed. He was received in audience by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, who presented him with a medal and also with their portraits as a token of their appreciation of his services to his native land. Dwarkanath came into intimate contact with the celebrities of the day in England, France, Prussia and Italy. Returning to India after a year, he started again for England in March, 1845 and died there, on the 1st August, 1846. His portrait by F. R. Say, which formerly hung in the vestibule of the Town Hall of Calcutta, and now adorns the Victoria Memorial Hall, was painted while he was on his first visit to England and purchased with funds raised by public subscription. A marble bust of Dwarkanath was also erected in his honour by his fellow-citizens of Calcutta in January, 1842 in the vestibule of the

Metcalfe Hall, formerly occupied by the Imperial Library. Dwarkanath's eldest son, Debendra Nath Tagore, father of the Poet Rabindranath, succeeded Rammohun as the second great leader of the Brahmo Samaj.

Ramanath Tagore (1800—1877) :

Ramanath Tagore was a brother of Dwarkanath Tagore and a cousin of Prosunno Coomar Tagore and was educated like them at Mr. Sherbourne's School. After leaving school, he was placed for some time in the firm of Alexander & Co., where he was initiated into the mysteries of commercial and banking business. He was Treasurer of the Union Bank, founded by Dwarkanath and others in 1829, till its failure, when he acted as one of the liquidators. Associated from an early age with Raja Rammohun Roy he came to adopt his theistic views and took a prominent part in the reforms initiated by him and in the conduct of the affairs of the Brahmo Samaj, of which he was appointed a Trustee. Ramanath was early interested in Politics and Political Economy and joined his cousin, Prosunno Coomar Tagore, in founding and editing the *Reformer*—a weekly journal in English. He was one of the founders of the British Indian Association and was its President for about 10 years. He wrote a strong pamphlet criticising the Rent Bill of 1859. Ramanath was appointed a member of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1866, and of the Governor-General's Council in 1873. When the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) visited Calcutta, he was elected President of the Committee for the reception of His Royal Highness at the Balgatchia Villa, and was the recipient of a handsome ring from the Prince as a souvenir. Ramanath was an active member of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and a Fellow of the Calcutta University. He was made a Raja in 1873, C.S.I. in 1874 and Maharaja in 1877—on the occasion of the assumption of the Imperial title by Queen Victoria. His whole career was one of public usefulness and benevolence, and his countrymen fittingly commemorated his services by erecting a beautiful statue of his by Geflowski, which adorns the lower vestibule of the Town Hall of Calcutta.

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Prosunno Coomar Tagore (1801—1858) :

Prosunno Coomar Tagore was a son of Gopi Mohan Tagore, and grandson of Darpanarain Tagore of Pathuriaghatta. He was educated at Mr. Sherbourne's School and the Hindu College. Although a big land-holder, he joined the legal profession and amassed a large fortune by his success in the profession. He published numerous works on Hindu Law and was considered the greatest authority of his time on the subject. Lord Dalhousie appointed him in 1854 as Clerk Assistant to the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, and in this office he showed conspicuous ability. He founded in 1831, with his cousin Ramanath, a weekly journal called the *Reformer* with the object of promoting the political interests of his countrymen. He was a devoted adherent of the theistic tenets with which the name of Raja Rammohun Roy is associated, and one of the early tracts of the Raja was



published in the name of Prosunno Coomar. After the conversion of his only son Ganendra Mohun (the first Indian Barrister) to Christianity, he became somewhat conservative in religious and social matters. A Governor of the Hindu College, a member of the Council of Education, of the Legislative Council and of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, one of the founders of the British Indian Association and its President in 1867, his distinguished public services were recognised by the Government, who made him a C.S.I. in 1866. He had a fine law library, which has since been presented to the Calcutta University by the Maharaja Tagore. His legacies and bequests for religious, charitable and educational purposes amounted to nearly 7 lakhs of rupees, of which 3 lakhs of rupees were left in trust to the Calcutta University for the foundation of the Tagore Law Lectureship. He died in 1868. A marble bust in the Town Hall and a seated marble statue in the porch of the Senate House in Calcutta commemorate the memory of one of the greatest Bengalis of the last century.

**Braja Mohun Majumdar (1784—1821):**

Braja Mohun and his brother Krishna Mohun Majumdar, sons of Radha Charan Majumdar, were valued coadjutors of Raja Rammohun Roy. The former was the author of *Pauttalik Mukha-Chapetika*—the second edition of which was published under the title of *Pauttalik Probodh*, and the latter was the author of some beautiful hymns, some of which were printed along with the hymns of Raja Rammohun Roy. In the introduction to an English translation of a pamphlet by Braja-mohan, entitled “A tract against the prevailing system of Hindoo Idolatry by Brajamohan Debashya,” published at the Baptist Mission Press, Circular Road, Calcutta, in 1821, the European translator states as follows:—

“The Author of the treatise, of which an English translation is herewith submitted to the Public, was Brojomohan Majoomdar, a Native of Bengal, belonging to the fourth class of the Hindoos. Rammohun Roy, his intimate friend, has communicated to the translator the following particulars concerning him—

“Brajamohan’s father was a person of respectability and was once employed as Dewan by Mr. Middleton, one of the Residents at the Court of Lucknow. Brajamohan was a good Bengali scholar and had some knowledge of Sanserit. He had made considerable progress in the study of the English language, and was also well versed in Astronomy; and at the time of his death was engaged in translating Fergusson’s Astronomy into Bengalee for the School Book Society. He was a follower of the Vedanta doctrine, in so far as to believe God to be a pure spirit; but he denied that the human soul was an emanation from God: and he admired very much the morality of the New Testament. Being suddenly taken ill of a bilious fever on the 6th of April last, he begged his friend, Rammohun Roy, to procure him the aid of a European physician, which request was immediately complied with; but it was too late:—the medicine administered did not produce the desired effect, and he died the very same night, aged thirty-seven years.”

Mr. Majumdar’s work was characterized in the second number of the *Friend of India* (Quarterly Series) as “a masterly exposure of the absurdities of the present Hindoo system.”

Nanda Kishore Bose (1802—1845):

Nanda Kishore Bose was a student of Raja Rammohun Roy's school. His son, Rajnarain Bose, the well-known Bengali writer on literary and religious subjects and for sometime President of the Adi Brahma Samaj, writes in his autobiography that, when after leaving the College, he interviewed Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Halliday, he asked Rajnarain if he was a son of "that Nanda Kishore who used to write English so well?". Nanda Kishore acted for some time as Secretary of Raja Rammohun Roy and was one of his most ardent disciples. When Kissory Chand Mitter wrote his monograph on Raja Rammohun Roy (published in the *Calcutta Review* in 1845) Nanda Kishore gave him some anecdotes and other materials. Nanda Kishore worked for some time in the office of the *Bengal Hurkaru*. He next worked as a clerk in the Opium Agency Office at Ghazipur, and, after returning to Bengal, as a clerk in the Treasury and the Special Commission Office for the resumption of *lakheraj* lands. He had implicit faith in the religion inculcated in the Vedanta. He died on the 7th December, 1843 at the early age of 43.

Tara Chand Chakravarty (1804— ?):

Born in 1804 Tara Chand Chakravarty was one of the earliest students of the Hindu College. He was well-versed in English, Sanscrit and Persian and was, for sometime, on the staff of the *Calcutta Journal* (edited by Mr. James Silk Buckingham). Tarachand also assisted H. H. Wilson in translating into English the Hindu *Puranas*. Tara Chand then became a school teacher and compiled an Anglo-Bengali Dictionary. Subsequently he served for some time as the Deputy Registrar of the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and as a Munsif. He was President of the Society for the Acquisition of Knowledge, and he and his friends—Ram Gopal Ghose, Dakhina Ranjan Mukherjee, K. M. Banerjee and others—were the pioneers of political agitation in Bengal under the guidance of George Thompson, M.P., whom Dwarkanath Tagore brought to India. This group came to be known as the "Chakravarty Faction." He edited the *Quill* for sometime with conspicuous ability and incurred the displeasure of the authorities for free criticism of the police. Tara Chand was one of Rammohun's favourite adherents and was the first Secretary of the Brahma Samaj. He was the author of several religious tracts of the Samaj and commenced publishing the *Manu Samhita* with text and commentaries. Towards the latter part of his life, he became the Chief Councillor of the Maharajah of Burdwan.

Ram Chandra Vidyabagish (1785—1844):

Ram Chandra Vidyabagish was the youngest of the four sons of Lakshmi Narayan Tarkabhusan and was born in a village named Malpara, on the bank of the river Hooghly, in 1785. His eldest brother, Nanda Kumar Vidyalkar, became a *Sannyasin* and came to be known as Hariharananda Tirthaswami. This man "during his peripatinations as a Hindu mendicant had come to Rungpur and there

met Rammohun, who had received him with great honour in recognition of his learning and liberality of spirit, and Tirthaswami, bound to Rammohun by love, followed him like a shadow. He practised the rules of *Tantric Bamuchar* and was a worshipper of One True God according to the *Mahanirvan Tantra*.\* Hariharananda died in 1832 at the age of 70.

Ram Chandra, who was educated at Benares and other places and studied *Smriti* with Rammohun Vidyabachaspati at Santipur, was introduced to Raja Rammohun Roy by his brother Hariharananda. The Raja took great interest in the young scholar. He made him study the *Vedanta* under Pundit Siva Prasad Misra and appointed him a lecturer at the Vedanta College established by him. When the *Atmiya Sabha* was established in 1815, Rammohun entrusted Ram Chandra with the duties of reading and explaining the *Upanishads* to its meetings. Vidyabagish was ultimately appointed a Professor of *Smriti* in the Sanskrit College, Calcutta.

Ram Chandra compiled a Bengali Dictionary and wrote a work on Astronomy. Some of his lectures on moral subjects delivered to the students of the Hindu College, at the instance of Prosunno Coomarr Tagore, were collected and published under the title of *Nitidarshan*.

When the Brahmo Samaj was first established in 1828 Ram Chandra Vidyabagish was appointed Minister by Raja Rammohun Roy, and he ministered to the spiritual needs of those who attended his services almost till his death. The first sermon from the pulpit of the Brahmo Samaj was preached by him. In 1843 Debendra Nath Tagore formally joined the Brahmo Samaj and invested Vidyabagish with the office of Acharya with a ceremony befitting the occasion. Shortly after this Ram Chandra had a stroke of paralysis. In the following year he started for Benares but died on the way at Murshidabad on the 20th Falgoon, 1766 Saka (1844) at the age of 59 years 21 days, after making over to Maharshi Debendranath the sacred charge that his departed friend had entrusted to him.

Kalinath Munshi (1801—40) and Baikunthanath Munshi (1806—55):

The two brothers, Kalinath Munshi and Baikuntha Nath Munshi, were Zemindars of the well-known Taki family, which rose to prosperity during the time of the Mahomedan Emperors and had great influence in the community. Their father, Rai Ramkanto Goho, served for some time under the East India Company as Munshi.

Both the brothers were noted for philanthropy and public spirit. The following extract from the *Friend of India* of the obituary notice of Kalinath speaks for itself:—

“He was among the most devoted admirers and followers of Raja Rammohun Roy and assisted him in the establishment of the Brahmo Sabha. He was foremost in the rank of those who

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\*From a letter signed “A devoted disciple of Rammohun Roy” in the *Tattwabodhini Patrika* for Agradhayan, 1789 Saka (1865)—quoted at pp. 34-35 of Mr. Hem Ch. Sarkar’s Edition of Miss Sophia Dobson Collet’s *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*.



**Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal:**

Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal was the son of Maharaja Joy Narain Ghosal Bahadur—founder of the Bhukoilash Raj family and a staunch advocate for the promotion of public education—to whom Benares owes a well-equipped College and a *thakurbaree*. Kali Sankar continued his father's philanthropic labors and established the Benares Blind Asylum, where its inmates received raiment and food free. He donated Rs. 20,000/- for the establishment of the Hindu College and was, in fact, one of the founders of the College. He received the title of Raja Bahadur from Lord Ellenborough in recognition of his valuable services, public charities and general benevolence. Two of his sons, Satya Charan and Satya Saran, and a grandson, Satyananda, were prominent members of the British Indian Association and patrons of letters and received from Government the title of Raja Bahadur.

**Annada Prasad Bannerjee:**

Annada Prasad Bannerjee belonged to the Bannerjee family of Telinipara (in the district of Hooghly) founded by Baidyanath Bannerjee, who, it is said, amassed a large fortune during the Bharatpur War in which he followed the Captain of a British army as Dewan. Annada Prasad's father, Abhaya Charan, was banian in the office of Messrs. Colvin & Co. of Calcutta and considerably added to the Zemindaries left by his father. He died at the early age of 35, and as his first wife became a *Suttee*, Annada Prasad was brought up by an affectionate step-mother. Annada Prasad also served as a banian in the office of Colvin & Co. and became an ardent follower of Raja Rammohun Roy. He established a Brahmo Samaj at his house and spent large sums of money for the publication of the *Upanishads* and other religious works. He also published a collected edition of Rammohun's Bengalee and Sanskrit Works in 1839[?].

**Raja Badan Roy or Buddinath Roy (?—1860).**

Raja Badan Roy, or Buddinath Roy Bahadur, was the third son of Maharaja Sukhmoy Roy, who deposited Rs. 1,50,000 with the Government for constructing the Cuttuck Road and received the title of Maharaja Bahadur and a medal from the British Government. Buddinath emulated his father's liberality and contributed Rs. 50,000/- to the Hindu College, Rs. 40,000/- towards the erection of the Cossipore Gun Foundry Ghat on the Ganges and the road leading from it to Dum Dum, Rs. 30,000/- to the Mayo Native Hospital, Rs. 20,000/- in aid of the funds for Native Female Education, Rs. 8,000/- towards the construction of the Karmanasha Bridge and Rs 6,000/- to the Zoological Society of London for which he was honoured with a highly complimentary note from the Marquis of Lansdowne together with a diploma of the London Zoological Society. Buddinath was one of the Directors of the Hindu College and received the title of Raja in 1825 with a gold medal.

## FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS

Kasi Nath Mullick (?—1864).

Kasi Nath Mullick was a grandson of Gour Charan Mullick, a millionaire of Burrabazar in Calcutta. He was distinguished for his numerous acts of charity. He had no issues and left his whole estate (now managed by the Administrator General of Bengal) for meeting the expenses of the religious and charitable institutions founded by himself, his mother, Chitra, and wife, Ranganmoni, who were all noted for piety. A *thakurbari* and a Sanskrit *tol* at Harrison Road, near Sinduriaputtee, still bear testimony to their religious fervor and the interest taken by them in the spread of education.

Mathuranath Mullick (?—1839).

Mathuranath Mullick was Dewan to Gour Charan Mullick—grandfather of Shama Charan Mullick, the Indian Rothschild, at whose beautiful villa at “Seven Tanks”, Cossipore, the reception of H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh was held in 1868. Towards the latter part of his life he entered the service of the Burdwan Raj. He died in 1839.

Brindaban Mitra.

Brindaban Mitra was the son of Pitambar Mitra, who served as Vakil of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh at the Court of Delhi. He received from the Emperor the title of Raja Bahadur and was invested with the rank of a Commander of 3,000 horse. He rendered, it is stated, some services to Warren Hastings during the revolt of Raja Chait Singh of Benares in 1771 and settled in Calcutta in 1787-88. On his death, in 1806, Brindaban inherited his wealth but, owing to extravagant habits, soon squandered away the bulk of his paternal property and had to take service for some time as Dewan to the Collector of Cuttack. He was the grandfather of the Raja Rajendralal Mitra, the renowned scholar and archæologist.

Baidyanath Mukherjee:

Baidyanath Mukherjee was the grandfather of Anukul Mukherjee, Vakil and for some time a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. Dewan Baidyanath was originally an inhabitant of Vangamora Gopinathpur in the district of Hooghly and subsequently settled in Calcutta. He was one of the influential Hindus who approached Sir Hyde East with the proposal to establish a Hindu College in Calcutta and became its “Native Secretary” when the College was established in 1817.

Gopee Mohun Tagore (1761—1818):

Gopee Mohun Tagore was the second son of Durponarain Tagore and grandfather of Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohun Tagore. He knew Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu, English, French and Portuguese. He composed some beautiful songs in Bengali. He held like his father an appointment under the French Government at Chandernagore and purchased big Zemindaries. A patron of arts, many illustrious Indian musicians were patronized by him—one of whom, Kali Mirza, was very

much liked by Raja Rammohun Roy. It is said that the Raja often took lessons in music from him, and some of Kali Mirza's songs strengthened him in his fight against idolatry.

Gopee Mohun was one of the founders of the Hindu College to which he contributed munificently and of which he was a Governor. His name appears next below the name of the Maharaja Bahadur of Burdwan in the commemorative marble tablet set up in the Presidency College in honour of the donors and founders of the Hindu College.

#### THE RAJA AS A LINGUIST

—“The Raja was acquainted more or less with ten languages: Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, English, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French. The two first he knew critically as a scholar, the third, fourth, fifth and sixth he spoke and wrote fluently; in the eighth, perhaps, his studies did not extend much beyond the originals of the Christian Scriptures; and in the latter two his knowledge was apparently more limited.”

SANDFORD ARNOT

*in the "Athenæum Journal," London, 1833.*

APPENDIX—E.

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER WRITINGS  
OF RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY  
IN PERSIAN, BENGALÉE, ENGLISH, SANSKRIT AND HINDI  
IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

PUBLISHED IN INDIA

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND OTHER LANGUAGES	WORKS IN ENGLISH
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SAKA ERA.	A.D.	I. "TUHFAT-UL-MUWAHHIDIN"*	
	1803 (?1804)	or	

"A Gift to Deists."

(In Persian with an Arabic  
introduction).

II. "MANAZARAT-UL-ADYAN"+

or

"The Discussions on Various  
Religions".

\*Rammohun's first work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, was published, it is stated, from Murshidabad. It was first translated into English, under the title of "A Gift to Deists", by Maulvi Obaidullah El Obaide, Superintendent of the Dacca Government Madrassa and published, with a preface by Rajnarain Bose, under the auspices of the Adi. Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, in 1884.—*Editor*.

†It has never been definitely established whether this book was ever published. Rammohun Roy writes at the end of his first publication, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, that he has left the further discussion of the subject to another work of his, entitled *Manazarat-ul-Adyan*, "Discussions on Various Religions." No copy of the book, however, has ever been found. It is just possible that Rammohun intended to write the book but was unable to do so for some reason or other. It only remains to be added that *Manazarat* is a form frequently adopted by theological writers in Persian in which two or more persons are introduced to discuss a given subject—*Editor*.



## WORKS IN ENGLISH

WORKS IN BENGALIEE AND  
OTHER LANGUAGES

SAKA ERA.	YEAR OF PUBLICATION	A.D.	
1737		1815	১। “বেদান্ত গ্রন্থ”
1738		1816	২। “বেদান্ত সার”
			৩। “তলবকার উপনিষৎ” (কেনোপনিষৎ)
			৪। “ঈশোপনিষৎ”
1739		1817	৫। “কঠোপনিষৎ”
			৬। “মুক্তকোপনিষৎ”

(1) Translation of an ABRIDGMENT OF THE VEDANT or The Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being; and that He Alone is the object of Propitiation and Worship.

(2) Translation of CENA [KENA] UPANISHAD, one of the chapters of the Sama Veda; according to the gloss of the celebrated Shancar-acharya; establishing the Unity and the Sole Omnipotence of the Supreme Being; and that He Alone is the Object of Worship.

(3) Translation of the ISHOPANISHUD, one of the chapters of the Yajoor Ved: according to the commentary of the celebrated Shankaracharya: establishing the Unity and Incomprehensibility of the Supreme Being; and that His Worship alone can lead to Eternal Beatitude.\*

(4) A DEFENCE OF HINDOO THEISM in reply to the Attack of an Advocate for Idolatry at Madras.†

\*The Preface to this translation of the *Ishopanishud* was re-published in Calcutta in 1844 by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha established by Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore in 1839.—*Editor*.  
†This tract was also republished in 1844 by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha.—*Editor*.

SAKA ERA.	YEAR OF PUBLICATION	WORKS IN BENGALEE AND OTHER LANGUAGES		WORKS IN ENGLISH	
		৭। “মাণ্ডুক্যোপনিষৎ”	(5) A SECOND DEFENCE of the Monotheistical System of the Vedas in reply to an apology for the present state of Hindoo Worship.*		
		৮। “ভট্টাচার্য্যের সহিত বিচার”			
1740	1818	৯। সহমরণ বিষয়ে প্রবর্তক ও নিবর্তকের—প্রথম সংবাদ	(6) Translation of A CONFERENCE between an advocate for, and an opponent of, THE PRACTICE OF BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE from the original Bungalow.		
		১০। “গায়ত্রীর অর্থ”			
		১১। “গোস্থানীর সহিত বিচার”			
1741	1819	১২। “সহমরণ বিষয়ে প্রবর্তক ও নিবর্তকের—দ্বিতীয় সংবাদ” (Printed at the Mission Press, Calcutta).	(7) Translation of the MOONDUK OPUNISHUD of the Uthuru-Ved, according to the gloss of the celebrated Shunkura-Charyu.		
			(8) Translation of the KUT'H-OPUNISHUD of the Ujoor-Ved, according to the gloss of the celebrated Sunkuracharyu.		
1742	1820	১৩। “শ্রবক্ষণা শাস্ত্রীর সহিত বিচার” (In Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengalee, and Bengali transliteration of Sanskrit).	(9) An apology for the PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE, independently of Brahmical Observances.†		
		১৪। “কবিতাকারের সহিত বিচার”	(10) A SECOND CONFERENCE between an advocate for, and an opponent of, THE PRACTICE OF BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE.		

\*Also re-published by the Tutuobodheney Sobha in 1844.—*Editor*.

†Re-published by the Tutuobodheney Sobha in 1844.—*Editor*.

WORKS IN ENGLISH

WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND  
OTHER LANGUAGES

YEAR OF  
PUBLICATION

SAKA ERA. A.D.

- (11) THE PRECEPTS OF JESUS, the Guide to Peace and Happiness; extracted from the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the four Evangelists. With translations into Sungscrit and Bengalee. Calcutta: Printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Circular Road.\*
- (12) AN APPEAL to the Christian Public IN DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS" by A Friend to Truth. Printed at Calcutta.
- (13) THE BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE,† or, the Missionary and the Brahmu, being a vindication of the Hindoo religion against the attacks of Christian Missionaries, I, II, and III.
- (14) SECOND APPEAL, to the Christian Public IN DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS."
- (15) Brief Remarks regarding MODERN ENCROACHMENTS ON THE ANCIENT RIGHTS OF FEMALES according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance.

- 1743 1821 ১৫। "ব্রাহ্মণসংবাদ" ১, ২, ৩  
(অথবা)  
"ব্রাহ্মণ ও মিসনরি সংবাদ"  
১৬। "পাদরি ও শিশু-সংবাদ"
- 1744 1822 ১৭। "চারি প্রমের উত্তর"

\*The collected Works of the Raja do not contain the Bengalee translations of "The Precepts of Jesus". A Bengalee translation, under the title "*Yisubranla Hitopadesa*," was published from Calcutta by Rakhaldas Halder in 1859.—*Editor*.

†The first three numbers of the *Brahmunical Magazine* were published in 1821, and the fourth in 1823, each being a separate tract. In the second edition of the first three numbers they were put together. In the year 1827 another edition of the Magazine was published, the 2nd and 4th numbers being published with some portions of the original left out and some portions revised, under the title of "Extracts from the *Brahmunical Magazine*," etc., and the 3rd number in full.—*Editor*.

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND OTHER LANGUAGES	WORKS IN ENGLISH
SAKA ERA. A.D. 1745 ... 1823	১৮   “পথ্যপ্রদান” —স্বয়ংগুরুচরিতাম্ তজ্জগদনন্দাপ্রবিশিষ্টে কৰ্ত্ত্বক (Medicine for the sick offered by one who laments his inability to perform All Righteousness). Printed at the Sanskrit Press, Calcutta.	(16) THE BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE, or the Mis- sionary and the Brahmun, No. 4. (17) HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS to his countrymen who believe in the One True God.* (18) A VINDICATION of the Incarnation of the Deity as the common basis of Hindooism and Christianity against the Schismatic attacks of R. Tytler, Esq., M.D. by Ram Doss†. Printed by S. Smith & Co., Hurkaru Press, Calcutta. (19) PETITIONS AGAINST THE PRESS REGULA- TIONS (a) Memorial to the Supreme Court, (b) Appeal to the King in Council. (20) A LETTER ON ENGLISH EDUCATION to His Excellency the Rt. Hon. Lord Amherst, the Governor-General in Council.‡

\*Appeared in the name of Prusunu Koomar Thakoor.

†“Ram Doss” was the name assumed by Rammohun

‡The letter was written urging Government to promote “a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful Sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College in Calcutta furnished with necessary books, instruments and other apparatus.”  
—Editor.

WORKS IN ENGLISH

WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND  
OTHER LANGUAGES

YEAR OF  
PUBLICATION  
SAKA ERA. A.D.

- (21) FINAL APPEAL to the Christian Public IN  
DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS."  
Printed at the Unitarian Press, Dhurm-tollah,  
Calcutta.\*
- (22) A DIALOGUE between a Missionary and three  
Chinese Converts.
- (23) A letter to Rev. Henry Ware on THE PROS-  
PECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.†
- (24) Translation of a Sanscrit Tract on DIFFERENT  
MODES OF WORSHIP.
- (25) BENGALÉE GRAMMAR in the English Lan-  
guage. Printed at the Unitarian Press, Dhurm-  
tollah, Calcutta.‡

1746 1824

1747 1825

1748 ১০। "ব্রহ্মনিষ্ঠ গৃহস্থের লক্ষণ"

২১। "কায়স্থের সহিত মতপান-  
বিষয়ক বিচার"

\*The following notice appeared as an introduction to the "Final Appeal", which was published in reply to the elaborate answer to the "Second Appeal" by Dr. Marshman of Serampore printed in the Fourth Number of the Quarterly Series of the *Friend of India*, December, 1821:—

"All the preceding works of the author on the Subject of Christianity were printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta; but the acting proprietor of that press having, since the publication of the Second Appeal, declined, although in the politest manner possible, printing any other work that the Author might publish on the same subject, he was under the necessity of purchasing a few types for his own use, and of depending principally upon native superintendence for the completion of the greater part of this work. This might form an apology to the public for the imperfections that may appear in typographical execution."—*Editor*.

†The whole correspondence was published in the form of a pamphlet in Cambridge (U. S. A.) in 1824 and re-printed in London in 1825.—*Editor*.

‡This publication had not so far been included in any collection of the Raja's works. It was re-printed for the first time by the "Tattvabodhini Patrika" (the monthly organ of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, edited by Mr. Kshitiendra Nath Tagore) in its issue of *Pous*, 1339 Bengali Era (January, 1933).—*Editor*.

# LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

## WORKS IN ENGLISH

- (26) A translation of a Sanskrit Tract, inculcating THE DIVINE WORSHIP, esteemed by those who believe in the revelation of the Veds as most appropriate to the nature of the Supreme Being.\*

- (27) ANSWER OF A HINDOO to the question, "Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerous attended established Churches?"

- (28) Petition to Government against Regulation III, of 1828 for THE RESUMPTION OF LAKHERAJ LANDS.

- (29) THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION: Religious Instructions founded on Sacred Authorities.

\*This translation was republished by the Tutuobodheney Sabha in 1844 under the title of "A Translation into English of the Gayutree inculcating the Divine Worship".—*Editor*.

†"Brahmasangit", we find, was published again in Calcutta in 1846 under the title "*Gitabali*—A Collection of Songs on Philosophical and Moral topics by Rammohun Roy and others" (pp. 28). Mention is also found of another edition published from Calcutta with the title of "*Raja Rammohun Ray-er Sangitabali*" in 1889.—*Editor*.

## WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND OTHER LANGUAGES

- |           |      |  |
|-----------|------|--|
| SAKA ERA. | A.D. |  |
| 1749      | 1827 | ২২। "বজ্রস্থী"                         |
|           |      | ২৩। "গায়ত্রী পরমোপাসনা<br>বিধানং"     |
|           |      | [In Sanskrit with Bengali translation] |

- |      |      |                         |
|------|------|-------------------------|
| 1750 | 1828 | ২৪। [?] "ব্রহ্মসঙ্গীত"† |
|      |      | ২৫। "ব্রহ্মোপাসনা"      |

- |      |      |  |
|------|------|--|
| 1751 | 1829 | ২৬। "সহমরণ বিষয়"<br>( তৃতীয় পুস্তক ) |
|      |      | ২৭। "অল্পষ্ঠান"                        |

YEAR OF PUBLICATION		WORKS IN BENGALIEE AND OTHER LANGUAGES	WORKS IN ENGLISH
SAKA ERA.	A.D.		
1752	1830		(30) The TRUST-DEED of the Brahma Samaj.
			(31) Abstract of the arguments regarding THE BURNING OF WIDOWS, considered as a religious rite.
			(32) Essays on the RIGHTS OF HINDOOS over ANCESTRAL PROPERTY, according to the Law of Bengal.
			(33) Letters on the HINDOO LAW OF INHERI- TANCE.*
			(34) ADDRESS TO LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, Governor-General of India, upon the passing of the Act FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SUTTEE.
1753	1831		(35) Counter-Petition to the House of Commons to the Memorial of the advocates of THE SUTTEE.
1755	1833	২৮। “গৌড়ীয় ব্যাকরণ” <sup>†</sup> উদ্ভাষা বিরচিত ক্রিয়ুত রাজা রামমোহন রায় দ্বারা পাণ্ডুলিপি ও কনিকাভা স্কুল বুক সোসাইটি দ্বারা এবং তন্মুদ্রায়ন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত হয়।	

\*Published in the *Bengal Hurkaru* from September to November, 1830.

†The “*Gaurīya Vyākaraṇa*” ran into five editions, the 5th and the last appearing in 1856, all published by the School Book Society of Calcutta.—*Editor*.

WORKS IN ENGLISH

YEAR OF PUBLICATION  
OTHER LANGUAGES

SAKA ERA. A.D.

N.B.—২৯। “কুলার্ণব তন্ত্র”। পঞ্চম খণ্ড।

প্রথম উল্লাস

(Reprinted from Sauskrit)

N.B.—৩০। ক্ষুদ্র পত্রী

(বিতরণার্থ মুদ্রিত)

N.B.—৩১। “আত্মানুবিবেক”

(Reprinted from Sanskrit with Bengalee translation)

1795-1802

1873-80 (১) “রাজা রামমোহন রায়

প্রণীত গ্রন্থাবলি”<sup>৭</sup>

—দ্বীযুক্ত রাজনারায়ণ বসু ও

দ্বীযুক্ত আনন্দচন্দ্র বোদান্তবংশীশ

কর্তৃক সংগৃহীত ও পুনঃ প্রকাশিত,

কলিকাতা আদি ব্রাহ্মসমাজ

যন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত।

N.B.—The dates of publication of the three Bengalee books numbered 29, 30 and 31 I have not been able to trace.—*Editor*.

<sup>৭</sup>The first collected edition of the Raja's Bengalee works was, it appears from a notice appearing in the *Calcutta Courier*, published in 1839. The notice ran thus :—thus :—

“It affords us great pleasure to be able to announce that Baboo Annodapersaud Bonerjee, a distinguished Patron of native education has published at his own expence (*sic*) the whole of the Bengalee writings of the late Raja Rammohun Roy, for the purpose of disseminating generally the enlightened views of that Indian philosopher in respect to theology and the Hindoo Shasters”. [*The Calcutta Courier*, January 6, 1840, quoted by Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article “News about Rammohun Roy from Contemporary Newspapers” in the *Indian Messenger*, March 20, 1932.]—*Editor*.



WORKS IN BENGALÉE AND  
OTHER LANGUAGES

YEAR OF  
PUBLICATION  
SAKA ERA A.D.  
1807 1885

WORKS IN ENGLISH

- (36) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Edited [with an Introduction] by Jogendra Chunder Ghose, M.A., B.L.—Compiled and published by Eshan Chunder Bose, Volume I. Oriental Press, Bhowanipore, Calcutta.
- (37) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Edited [with an Introduction] by Jogendra Chunder Ghosh, M.A., B.L.—Compiled and Published by Eshan Chunder Bose. Volume II. Aruna Press, Bhowanipore, Calcutta. London Agents :—Messrs. Williams & Norgate.

1827 1905\* ( ২ ) রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের  
সংস্কৃত ও বাঙ্গালা গ্রন্থাবলী  
—পাণিনি-কথোক্তলিঙ্গ,  
বাহ্যদ্রব্যাঙ্গ, এলাহাবাদ  
ইহতে প্রকাশিত † ;  
কলিকাতা কুন্তলীন প্রেসে  
মুদ্রিত, ( ১৩১২ )

\*Between the years 1840 and 1848, and in 1872, the Tutuobodheney Sobha of Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore re-published most of the works of the Raja in Bengalee and English on the Upanishads and the Vedanta. Selections from the Raja's works in Bengalee were also published in the pages of the *Tutuobodheney Patrika*, the monthly organ of the Sobha, edited by Akshaya Kumar Datta. Besides the tracts already noted, the two re-publications mentioned below deserve special notice :  
1. *Panchopanishad* (a collection of five Upanishads, viz., Katha, Vajasanaya (i.q. Isa), Talavakāra (i.q. Kena), Mundaka, and Māndukya, Sanskrit text with Bengali explanations based on Saṅkara's commentary, by Raja Rammohun Roy, Calcutta, 1848.  
2. Selections from Several Books of The Vedānta : Translated from the Original Sanskrit by Raja Rammohun Roy, Calcutta, 1844.

† Reprint of the First Edition edited by Rajnarain Bose.

NAME OF WORKS

(38) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Including some additional letters and an English translation of the Raja's "Tuhfatul Muwahhiden" [with an introduction by Ramananda Chatterjee.] Published by the Panini Office, Allahabad.†

PUBLISHED IN ENGLAND

1817

I. "Abridgment of the Vedant" and the English translation of "Kena Upanishad" published in Calcutta in 1816—Reprinted in London with a preface by John Digby with a letter addressed to him by Rammohun Roy.

1823

II. Final Appeal to the Christian Public in Defence of the "Precepts of Jesus," London: Hunter.

1824

III. The Precepts of Jesus—the Guide to Peace and Happiness, extracted from the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the Four Evangelists to which are added the First and Second Appeal to the Christian Public, in reply to the Observations of Dr. Marshman, of Serampore Published by the Unitarian Society, London. [Reprinted in America in 1828. Second London Edition : 1834.]

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†Reprint of the First Edition edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghose.

1825

IV. Answers to queries by the Rev. H. Ware, of Cambridge, U. S., printed in "Correspondence relative to the Prospects of Christianity, and the Means of promoting its Reception in India" London: C. Fox.

1832

V. Translation of several principal Books, Passages, and Texts of the Veds, and of some Controversial Works in Brahminical Theology. London: Parbury\*.

\*This collection contains the following Tracts, to the titles of which are affixed the dates of their publication in Calcutta:—

(a) Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered Work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being, and that He alone is the Object of Propitiation and Worship—1816.

(b) Translation of the *Moonduk-Oopunishud* of the *Uthuruu Ved*.—1819.

(c) Translation of the *Cena Upanished*, one of the Chapters of the *Sama Veda*—1824.

(d) Translation of the *Kut'h-Opunishud* of the *Ujoor-Ved*.

(e) Translation of the *Ishopunishud*, one of the Chapters of the *Yajur Veda*—1816.

(f) A Translation into English of a Sungskrit Tract, inculcating the Divine Worship; esteemed by those who believe in the Revelation of the *Veds*, as most appropriate to the Nature of the Supreme Being—1827.

(g) A Defence of Hindoo Theism, in reply to the Attack of an Advocate for Idolatry, at Madras—1827.

(h) Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Veds; in reply to an Apology for the present state of Hindoo Worship—1817.

(i) An Apology for the Pursuit of Final Beatitude, independently of Brahminical Observances—1820.

(j) Translation of a Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of the practice of burning Widows alive; from the original Bungla—1818.

(k) A Second Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the practice of burning Widows alive—1820.

(l) Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows, considered as a Religious Rite—1830.

(m) Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance—1822.

1832—*Contd.*

VI. Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal. With an Appendix containing Letters on the Hindoo Law of Inheritance. [Calcutta, 1830.] London : Smith, Elder & Co.

VII. Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems in India, and of the General Character and Condition of its Native Inhabitants, as submitted in Evidence to the Authorities in England. With Notes and Illustrations. Also a brief Preliminary Sketch of the Ancient and Modern Boundaries, and of the History of that country. Elucidated by a Map. London : Smith Elder & Co.\*

1833

VIII. Translation of the Creed maintained by the Ancient Brahmins, as founded on the Sacred Authorities. Second Edition, reprinted from the Calcutta Edition. London : Nichols and Son.

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\*The book mainly contains the Raja's answers to the questionnaire issued by the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to consider the question of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. It is divided into the following chapters:—

1. Preliminary Remarks.
2. Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India. [Sept. 19, 1831.]
3. Questions and Answers on the Revenue System of India. [August 19, 1831.]
4. A Paper on the Revenue System of India. [August 19, 1831.]
5. Answers to Additional queries respecting the condition of India. [Sept. 28, 1831.]
6. Appendix to the Exposition of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India.
7. Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans [July 14, 1832.]
8. Extract from a Speech on the Settlement of Europeans in India.—*Editor.*

[illegible]

After the list of the Raja's publications had been set up in type, we were informed by Mr. Banendra Nath Banerji that the British Museum in London has several copies of *Indiastatographien*. The British Museum Catalogue mentions the following :

- [illegible]

**NORR.**—Besides some portions of a paper of the same subject published by Mr. Sandford Arnott, the Raffle Secretary in England, in an edition of the "Athenæum" (London), of one week before his departure from Calcutta, he prepared, while in England, various additional copies of a paper of the same subject, which were sent to the Salt Monopoly in India, the Abkari Board at Calcutta, against the Salt Monopoly in India, the Abkari Board at Calcutta, an unpublished "Journal," which the Raffle kept in England &c.

## APPENDIX: Page 112

1944

YEAR OF  
PUBLICATION

SAKA FRA  
1823

A.D.  
1901

The English Works of Rabi Samudraiah Kabi.  
 Edited by Jyotiraj Chakraborty, Chh. B.  
 published in 3 volumes, by Sri Lanka Book  
 Agents:—S. K. Lahari & Co., Calcutta.

## APPENDIX—F

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

[Some books, pamphlets and magazine articles relating  
or having reference to Raja Rammohun Roy.]

#### BOOKS and PAMPHLETS—

1. "A Review of the Labours, Opinions, and Character of Raja Rammohun Roy, etc."—By Dr. Lant Carpenter: London and Bristol: 1833.
2. "A Sermon on the occasion of the lamented death of the Raja Rammohun Roy", with a Biographical Sketch—By Robert Aspland: London: 1833.
3. A Biographical Memoir prefixed to the "Precepts of Jesus"—By Rev. Dr. T. Rees: 2nd London Edition: 1834.
4. "A Biographical Memoir of the Late Raja Rammohun Roy, together with a series of extracts from his writings"—By Dr. Lant Carpenter: Calcutta: 1835.
5. "The Last Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy [with a Biographical Sketch by Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter]"—By Mary Carpenter: London: 1866. [Re-printed by the Rammohun Library: Calcutta: 1915.]
6. "A Lecture on the Life and Labours of Ramhohun Roy" (delivered in Boston, U.S.A., 1845)—By William Adam: Edited by Rakhal das Halder: Calcutta: 1879.
7. "Rajah Rammohun Roy, the Bengali Religious Reformer"—By Rev. K. S. Maedonald: Calcutta: 1879.
8. "*Mahatmâ Rajâ Râmmohun Rây-cr Jibancharit*" (Like of Rammohun Roy in Bengali)—By Nagendranath Chatterji: Calcutta: 1881.
9. "Raja Rammohun Roy", (Address delivered by Prof. Max Müller in the Bristol Museum, September 27, 1883, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Raja's death) published in his *Biographical Essays*: (pp. 1—48): London; 1884.
10. "Rammohun Roy": (A Monograph in Bengali)—By Rabindranath Tagore: Calcutta: 1885.
11. A biographical introduction to the *English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy* by the Editor, Jogendra Chunder Ghose: Vol. I: Calcutta: 1885.
12. "Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Sophia Dobson Collet: London: 1900. [Edited by Hem Chandra Sarkar with an Introduction: Calcutta 1913.]
13. "Rammohun Roy and Modern India"—By Ramananda Chatterjee: Calcutta: 1918.

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14. "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England", (Based on unpublished State Records)—By Brajendra Nath Banerji: Calcutta: 1926.
15. "Rammohun Roy: The Father of Modern India" (A pamphlet containing the Introduction to the Indian edition of Miss Collet's biography of the Raja)—By Hem Chandra Sarkar.
16. "*Sangbâd Patre Sekaler Kathâ*" (A history of olden times in newspapers, in Bengali)—Compiled and Edited by Brajendra Nath Banerji: Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad: 1933.

### MAGAZINE ARTICLES—

1. *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature*, Vols. XIII to XX; (1818—1825): London.
2. *The Asiatic Journal* (London), September-December, 1833—An article on the Raja (purported to have been written by "a friend of Rammohun." The January-April issue of 1835 of the same *Journal* gives the information that the article was written by Mr. Sandford Arnot, Raja's Secretary in England).
3. *The Calcutta Review*, December, 1845, (No. VIII, Vol. IV.)—An exhaustive biographical article entitled "Rammohun Roy"—By Kissory Chand Mitter.
4. *The Fortnightly Indian Mirror* (Calcutta), July 1, 1865—An article entitled "The Brahmo Samaj or Theism in India", being a discourse on the life and labours of Rammohun Roy and Debendra Nath Tagore—By Keshub Chunder Sen. [Reprinted by the Brahmo Tract Society, 2nd ed: Calcutta: 1917.]
5. *The Calcutta Review*, 1866. An article entitled "Rammohun Roy", reviewing Mary Carpenter's "The Last Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Kissory Chand Mitter.
- 6—24. *The Modern Review* (Calcutta):
  - (a) June 1926—"A Portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy" (Translated from the French)—By N. C. Chaudhuri.
  - (b) June 1927—"Notes, p. 764" "Rammohun to Dr. Bowring",—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
  - (c) September 1928—"Foundation of the Brahmo Samaj"—By N. C. Ganguly.
  - (d) September 1928—"Raja Rammohun Roy at Rangpur"—By Jyotirmoy Das Gupta.
  - (e) October 1928—"Rammohun Roy on International Fellowship"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
  - (f) December 1928—"The English in India should adopt Bengali as their Language"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
  - (g) January 1929—"Rammohun Roy's Political Mission to England, I"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
  - (h) February 1929—"Rammohun Roy's Political Mission to England, II"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
  - (i) May 1929—"Rammohun Roy on the Value of Modern Knowledge"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.



- (j) June 1929—"Rammohun Roy and an English Official"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (k) July 1929—"Rammohun Roy on Religious Freedom and Social Equality"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (l) October 1929—"The Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (m) January 1930—"Rammohun Roy's Engagements with the Emperor of Delhi"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (n) May 1930—"Rammohun Roy in the Service of the East India Company"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (o) April 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", I—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (p) May 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", II—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (q) August 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", III—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (r) March 1932—"English Impressions of Rammohun Roy before his visit to England"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (s) June 1932—"Rammohun Roy on the disabilities of Hindu and Muhammadan Jurors"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

25. *The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (Patna), June 1930—"Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

26. *The Calcutta Review*, August 1931—"A Chapter on the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

27—31. *The Indian Messenger* (Calcutta),

- (a) December 6, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (b) December 13, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (c) December 20, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (d) December 27, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (e) March 20, 1932—"News about Rammohun Roy from Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

32. *Nava-vidhan* (Calcutta): Articles from the *Indian Mirror* (1863—1867) reprinted in the issues of the *Navavidhan* beginning with that of May 11th, 1933.

33—37. *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette*.

- (a) September 1, 1928—"An Unknown Chapter of the Calcutta Press: Rammohun Roy and his Persian paper"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (b) September 29, 1928—"Rajah Rammohun Roy as a Citizen of Calcutta"—By Nalin Chandra Ganguly and Alin Chandra Ganguly.
- (c) December 22, 1928—"Calcutta and the Cultural Evolution of Modern India"—By Bipin Chandra Pal.

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- (d) November 22, 1930—"Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (e) December 20, 1930—"Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta" (1823--1935)—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.
- (f) December 20, 1930—"The First Memorial Meeting in Calcutta: To do honour to the memory of a great Indian citizen"—By Manmatha Nath Ghosh.

35. Presidential Address by Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhillay at the North Bengal Bengalee Literary Conference 1923, giving an account of Rammohun's connection with and stay at Rangpur.

[A fuller bibliography will be published in a later issue of the *Publicity Booklet*—EDITOR.]

## APPENDIX—G

# Rammohun Roy Centenary

## SCHEME OF CELEBRATION\*

### INTRODUCTION

“Let me hope that in celebrating his (Rammohun Roy’s) Centenary, we shall take upon ourselves the task of revealing to our own and contemporaneous civilizations the multi-sided and perfectly balanced personality of this great man.”—These were the words of the Poet Rabiindranath Tagore, in concluding his address from the chair at the Preliminary Meeting at the Senate House. And the task thus set to the organisers of the celebration by Rabiindranath has largely inspired and guided them in framing the scheme of work for the Centenary, which, it is hoped, will help to bring out the different aspects of Rammohun Roy’s life-work with a view to stimulating a wider and intensive study of the Raja, who, in the words of his English biographer, “stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future, ... who leads the way...not to, but *through* Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both.” To reveal to our own people and to the world at large the personality of such a man is no easy task. But the Raja has revealed himself to a considerable extent in the voluminous writings left by him. Unfortunately for us, and particularly for the present generation, these writings are difficult, if not almost impossible, now to obtain. No individual or collected edition of his Works have appeared for nearly thirty years. The chief task of the organisers of this Centenary will, therefore, be the re-publication of the Raja’s collected works, both in English and in Bengali. His Sanskrit and Persian works also must be included.

Rammohun Roy’s writings comprise a vast range of subjects, religious, social, economic, administrative, educational and political. There is hardly any aspect of our national life with which he did not deal. Many of his utterances find echoes in the national aspirations of to-day.

In 1880 his Bengali and Sanskrit works were collected by the late Eshan Chunder Bose, and edited and published in one volume, under the auspices of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, by the late Raj Narain Bose

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\*Adopted by the Working Committee at its 1st and 2nd meetings, held on the 4th and 24th March, 1933, respectively.

and Pandit Ananda Chandra Vedantavagis. In 1905 this was reprinted by the Panini Office, Allahabad.

In 1881 his Persian treatise, *Tuhfat-ul-Munahhidin* ("A Gift to Monotheists") was translated into English by Maulavi Obaidulla El Obaide, Superintendent of the Dacca Government Madrasa, and published under the auspices of the Adi Brahma Samaj.

In 1885 his English works were for the first time collected and published in two volumes by the late Eshan Chunder Bose under the editorship of Rai Bahadur Jogendra Chunder Ghose, who contributed a valuable introduction to this edition. In 1905 the Panini Office, Allahabad, reprinted this in a one-volume edition, in which the English translation of the Persian treatise was also included.

Since the publication of the above (all of which have been out of print for nearly three decades), many of the Raja's hitherto unknown writings and letters have been unearthed, particularly through the indefatigable and painstaking researches of Mr. Brajendranath Banerji, in the State archives of India and England. Further, some of the Raja's scattered writings, which have not up to the present found a place in any of the collected editions, are now available. All these are to be incorporated in the Centenary Edition of the Raja's Works, every attempt will be made to make which a model of completeness and accuracy, and at the same time so priced as to be within the means of the rich and the poor alike.

### (I) PUBLICATIONS.

(a) All published and hitherto unpublished Works of the Raja in English, Bengalee, Sanskrit and Persian to be collected and published at a popular price. As far as practicable, this edition is to conform strictly to the editions published by the Raja himself.

(b) *Rammohun Anthology*.—A comprehensive selection from the writings of the Raja in English, Sanskrit and Bengali, with introductory notes, etc., and a portrait of the Raja.

(c) *Studies and Monographs* on the Raja as are calculated to interpret him from various points of view, to be secured from writers who have made a special study of his works, and who are competent to deal with the subject, to be collected together in a volume. This volume is to include also such memoirs and monographs as have already appeared, and are considered to be of outstanding importance.

(d) *A Commemoration Volume* to be prepared, comprising (i) tributes paid to the Raja by his admirers in the East and the West on the occasion of the Centenary, (ii) a biographical sketch, (iii) a complete bibliography and comprehensive chronology, (iv) some portraits, and pictures of his birth-place and last resting place, (v) facsimile reprints of important letters or documents, etc.; and also (vi) select proceedings of the Convention of Religions, the General Conference, the Bengalee Literary Conference, etc., and an account of the celebrations held in different parts of India and abroad.



## SCHEME OF CELEBRATION

It is also proposed, in the near future,

- (c) to construct a motorable *Road to Radhanagore*, and
- (d) to acquire Rammohun Roy's *Maniktala Residence* (Upper Circular Road), at present occupied by the Sukea Street Police Station.

### (7) PUBLICITY

For the purpose of giving adequate publicity to the Centenary, the publication of—

(a) *Illustrated booklets in English* containing (i) a short sketch of the Raja's life, (ii) select passages from the Raja's own writings and from appreciations of the Raja, (iii) a chronological account of the Raja's life and works, (iv) the Scheme of Celebration and Appeal for funds, etc.

(b) Leaflets in the principal Indian Vernaculars.

(c) Pamphlets, posters, etc., and arrangements to utilise the Press and other publicity organisations.

(d) Issuing an Appeal over the signature of the Mayor of Calcutta to the Mayors of important cities of Asia, Europe, and America, informing them of the Centenary, and asking for their co-operation.

### SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS REFERRED TO APPROPRIATE SUB-COMMITTEES

*Publications.*—The publication, under the auspices of the Centenary Committee, if highly commended by it, of books on Rammohun Roy by competent authors, and printed at their own expense. (ii) Preparation of English translations of such among Rammohun Roy's writings as have so far not been translated.

*Foundations.*—The establishment of

(a) Rammohun Roy Study Circles.

(b) Prizes and Medals for Essays on Rammohun Roy.

(c) A well-equipped School for the Depressed Classes.

(d) A peripatetic Educational Exhibition.

*Publicity.*—(a) Issuing "Rammohun Roy Centenary" stamps, post-cards, and special stationery.

(b) Striking a Centenary Medallion with the head of the Raja in profile on the obverse, and a symbolic representation of the meeting of India and the West, with suitable inscriptions, on the reverse.

(c) Broadcasting, all over the world, a short speech on Rammohun Roy by Rabindranath Tagore through the Radio on a day during the celebrations.

## APPENDIX—H

# Rammohun Roy Centenary

## THE GENERAL COMMITTEE\*

### OFFICE-BEARERS

#### PRESIDENT:

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

#### Vice-Presidents:

Sir J. C. Bose, Sir P. C. Ray, Sir Brajendranath Seal, Sir Nilratan Sircar, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Sir R. N. Mookerjee, Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra, Mr. Ramnanda Chatterjee, Rev. P. G. Bridge, Principal J. R. Banerjea, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Mr. P. K. Sen, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, H. H. the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj, Sja. Golapsundari Devi (Mrs. Harimohan Roy), Sja. Sarala Ray (Mrs. P. K. Ray), Sja. Kamini Ray, Maharaja Sir Prodyot Coomar Tagore, The Hon. Raja Sir Manmathanath Roy Chowdhury, Mr. Krishnakumar Mitra, Mr. Kshitindranath Tagore, The Hon. Sir C. C. Ghose, The Hon. Mr. Justice Manmathanath Mukerji, Sir N. N. Sircar, Rt. Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, Swami Shivananda, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Maulana Muhammad Akrum Khan, Mr. G. D. Birla, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea, Sir Bipin Bihari Ghose.

#### Treasurer:

Mr. Hirendranath Datta.

#### Deputy Treasurer:

Mr. Dhirendranath Mitra.

#### General Secretary:

Mr. Jatindranath Basu.

#### Joint Secretaries:

Dr. B. C. Ghosh.

Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti.

Mr. Rathindranath Tagore.

Mr. Charuchandra Bhattacharyya.

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\*A General Committee, consisting of 400 members, was appointed by the Preliminary Public Meeting of the Centenary on the 18th February, 1933, entrusted with the task of celebrating the occasion in Calcutta and other places in Bengal and India. The General Committee met twice and appointed a Working Committee which it authorized "to do all that may be necessary for the purposes of the celebration."

## THE WORKING COMMITTEE

*Function:—To do all that may be necessary for the purpose of organizing the Centenary.*

*Personnel:—*Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, *Vice-Presidents*; Mr. Hirendra Nath Datta, *Treasurer*; Mr. Dharendra Nath Mitra, *Deputy Treasurer*; Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu, *General Secretary*; Dr. B. C. Ghosh, Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, Mr. Rathindra Nath Tagore, Mr. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya, *Joint Secretaries*.

Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Khan Bahadur Asad-uz-Zaman, Rai Bahadur A. C. Banerjee, Mr. Gonendra Nath Banerjee, Mr. Sachindra Nath Banerjee, Dr. Nabajiban Banerji, Mr. C. C. Biswas, Mr. J. K. Biswas, Dr. Debendra Mohan Bose, Mrs. Kumudini Basu, Mr. Rajsekhar Bose, Mr. Satyananda Bose, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. Kshitish Prasad Chattopadhyaya, Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, Dr. Premankur De, Dr. Sukumar Ranjan Das, Sja. Indira Devi, Capt. N. N. Dutta, Mr. Dwijendra Nath Datta, Mr. Sisir Kumar Dutt, Miss Jyotirmoyi Ganguli, Mr. Deva Prasad Ghosh, Mr. Jyotish Chandra Ghose, Dr. U. N. Ghoshal, Mr. Atul Chandra Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra Gupta, Mr. S. K. Halder, Mrs. S. K. Halder, Mr. Amal Home, Mr. Kali Prasad Khaitan, Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, Prof. S. C. Mahalanobis, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Mr. Surendra Nath Mallik, Mr. Gagan Vehari L. Mehta, Mr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Mr. S. C. Mukerjee, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Prof. Nibaran Chandra Ray, Mr. Nihar Ranjan Ray, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Roy, Mr. Sarojendra Nath Ray, Mr. Kiran Sankar Ray, Mrs. Sadhan Chandra Roy, Mr. Amiya Kumar Sen, Dr. Anil Kumar Sen, Mr. Dharendra Nath Sen, Mr. Bidhubhushan Sen-Gupta, Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen-Gupta, Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen, Mr. Sudhir Kumar Sen.

(a) The Secretaries of all Sub-committees are *ex-officio* Members of the Working Committee.

(b) The Working Committee usually meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the Committee Room of the Albert Institute, 15, College Square.

## THE SUB-COMMITTEES\*

Besides the "Co-ordination Board for Provincial Celebrations," these 11 Sub-committees have been formed:—

(1) Finance, (2) Works and Studies, (3) Commemoration Volume, (4) Publicity, (5) International Celebrations and Memorials, (6) Radhanagore Pilgrimage, (7) Convention and Conferences, (8) Women's Conference and Celebrations, (9) Exhibition, (10) Permanent Memorials, and (11) Foundations.

(a) All the Sub-committees have power to co-opt members.

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\*Including Additions and Alterations up to the date of going to press.



## RAMMOHUN RÔY CENTENARY

(b) As it has been reported that the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad may hold a Bengalee Literary Conference at Radhanagore in connection with the Rammohun Roy Centenary, the Parishad has been requested to organise the Conference in co-operation with the *Convention and Conferences Sub-committee*, and a separate Sub-committee for the Bengalee Literary Conference has not been formed.

### CO-ORDINATION BOARD FOR PROVINCIAL CELEBRATIONS.

*Functions:—For Provincial Celebrations, a number of ladies and gentlemen in the different provinces of India are being requested to take a lead in the matter by forming local committees of representative people to organize the Centenary. To co-ordinate the work of these committees in the different provinces, as also in the different districts of Bengal, a Co-ordination Board has been formed.*

*Personnel:—Sir P. C. Ray, Sir C. V. Raman, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, The Hon. Mr. B. K. Basu, Mr. C. C. Biswas, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Nirmal Chandra Chunder, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. J. N. Basu, Dr. B. C. Ghosh, Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, Mr. Rathindranath Tagore, and Mr. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya, ex-officio.*

*Mr. Amal Home, Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, and Dr. Kalidas Nag—Secretaries.*

### (1) FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions:—(i) Raising funds ; (ii) ascertaining from all Sub-committees, including the "Co-ordination Board for Provincial Celebrations," the probable expenditure to be incurred by them ; (iii) preparing a budget ; and (iv) making all expenditure conform to the provisions of the budget.*

*Personnel:—Dr. B. C. Roy, Chairman, Dr. Narendra Nath Law, Mr. Brij Mohan Birla, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, Mr. Dhirendranath Mitra, Mr. Amal Home, Mr. Jyotish Chandra Ghose, Mr. J. K. Biswas, Mr. Deviprasad Khaitan, Mrs. N. C. Sen, Mrs. P. K. Sen, Mrs. Sadhan-chandra Roy, Mrs. Maya Bose, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Dr. Nabajiban Banerji, Dr. Premankur De, Mr. Mahitosh Roy Chaudhuri, Mr. Satyananda Bose, Prof. Nibaran Chandra Ray, Mr. Sudhausu Mohan Bose, Mr. Sudhir Kumar Sen, Dr. Anil Kumar Sen, Mr. Rajshekhar Bose, Mr. P. D. Himatsingka, Mr. Yogananda Das, Mr. J. C. Mukerjee, Mrs. J. C. Mukerjee, Mrs. Rama Devi, Mr. Bidhu Bhushan Sen-Gupta, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Ray, Mr. Sisir Kumar Dutt, Messrs. J. N. Basu, Satis Chandra Chakravarti and Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya, ex-officio.*  
*Captain N. N. Dutta—Secretary.*

### (2) WORKS AND STUDIES SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions:—(i) Collection and publication of the Works of the Raja on the lines laid down in the Scheme ; (ii) publication of Studies and Anthology.*

## THE SUB-COMMITTEES

*Personnel*:—Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Mr. Hirendranath Datta, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Dr. B. C. Ghosh, Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan, Mr. Bijay Chandra Majumdar, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Mr. Rajshekhar Bose, Right Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, Mr. Maqbul Ahmad, Mr. Mafazzal Haq, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Mr. Amal Home, Dr. Nareshehandra Sen-Gupta, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. Brajendranath Banerji, Mr. Atul Chandra Gupta, Rai Jogendra Chunder Ghose Bahadur, Dr. Sarojkumar Das, Mr. Kedarnath Chatterjee, Messrs. J. N. Basu, Satis Chandra Chakravarti, and Charn-chandra Bhattacharyya, *ex-officio*.

Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis—*Secretary*.

### (3) COMMEMORATION VOLUME SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions*:—*Publication of the Commemoration Volume, as detailed in the Scheme.*

*Personnel*:—Mr. Pramatha Chaudhuri, Mr. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Mr. J. K. Biswas, Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen, Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Mr. Nihar Ranjan Ray, Mr. Narendra Nath Mukherji, Messrs. J. N. Basu, Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya and Satis Chandra Chakravarti, *ex-officio*.

Mr. Amal Home—*Secretary*.

### (4) PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions*:—(i) *Giving publicity, through the Press, to the Centenary, and carrying on all works connected with such publicity*; (ii) *issuing leaflets, pamphlets, and posters, Centenary stamps, postcards and special stationery*; (iii) *appeals to cities abroad through the Mayor of Calcutta*; (iv) *striking of a Centenary Medallion*; (v) *broadcasting of speeches on Rammohun through the Radio.*

*Personnel*:—Dr. D. N. Maitra, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. Nandalal Bose, Mr. Amal Home, Mr. Gonendra Nath Banerjee, Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, Mr. Asoke Chatterjee, Mr. Nripendra Nath Mazumdar, Mr. K. M. Purkayastha, Mr. Hem Chandra Nag, Mr. Prabodhehandra Chatterji, Mr. Mrinalkanti Bose, Mr. Satyendranath Mazumdar, Mr. Gopal Lal Sanyal, Mr. Dhirendranath Sen, Mr. Satyendrakumar Basu, Mr. Mujib-ur-Rahman, Maulana Muhammad Akrum Khan, Mr. J. N. Basu, Dr. B. C. Ghosh and Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, *ex-officio*.

Mr. Bidhubhushan Sen-Gupta—*Secretary*.

### (5) INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATIONS AND MEMORIALS SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions*:—(i) *Organization of celebrations in London, Bristol, and Seats of Learning in Europe, with the co-operation of U. and other liberal religious movements*; (ii) *placing of a Ma.*

## RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY

at 48, Bedford Square, London ; (iii) taking steps, on sufficient funds being raised, for the construction of a Building with a hall in London named after the Raja.

*Personnel*:—Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, *Chairman* : Mr. Surendranath Mallik, Mr. N. C. Sen, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, Dr. Satyananda Roy, Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen, Dr. Debendra Mohan Bose, Mr. Sndhirkumar Sen, Dr. P. K. Sen, Mrs. P. K. Sen, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Mitter, Dr. Phanibhushan Ghosh ; Messrs. J. N. Basu, Satis Chandra Chakravarti and Rathindranath Tagore, *ex-officio*.

Dr. Kalidas Nag—*Secretary*.

### (6) RADHANAGORE PILGRIMAGE SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions*:—(i) Arranging for a Pilgrimage to Radhanagore, (ii) taking steps for the construction of a motorable Road to Radhanagore.

*Personnel*:—Maharaja Sir Prodyot Coomar Tagore, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Dr. Pramathanath Banerjee, Mr. Dharani Mohan Roy, Sja. Hemlata Devi, Mr. S. N. Mallik, Mr. Jyotishchandra Ghose, Mr. Sachindra Prasad Basu, Dr. Upendranath Ghoshal, Dr. Sukumar Ranjan Das, Dr. Satyananda Roy, Mr. Amal Home, Mr. Taraknath Mukherji, Mr. Amarnath Mukherji, Mr. Kauni Lal Goswami, Kumar Munindra Deva Rai Mahasaya, Mr. Jatindranath Chakravarti, Mr. Nitya Gopal Ray, Dr. Bimala Charan Ganguly, Mr. Gangacharnn Mukherjee, Mr. Kshemendranath Tagore, Mr. J. N. Basu, Dr. B. C. Ghosh and Mr. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya, *ex-officio*.

Mr. Dwijendranath Datta—*Secretary*.

### (7) CONVENTION AND CONFERENCES SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions*:—Arrangements for the holding of (i) a Convention of Religions, and (ii) a General Conference.

*Personnel*: Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Mr. Kshitindranath Tagore, Dr. Pramathanath Banerjee, Right Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, Mr. H. K. Mukherji, Mr. Hirendranath Datta, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Dr. U. N. Ghoshal, Dr. Sunit Kumar Chatterji, Dr. Sukumar Ranjan Das, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Satyananda Bose, Sjt. Devapriya, Mr. Amiyakumar Sen, Dr. Premankur De, Dr. Nareshchandra Sen-Gupta, Dr. Satyananda Roy, Mr. Wahed Husain, Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Mr. Abul Hashem Khan Chowdhuri, Mr. Surojendranath Ray, Mr. Amal Home, Mrs. Kumudini Basu, Miss Jyotirmoyi Ganguli ; Messrs. J. N. Basu, Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya and Rathindranath Tagore, *ex-officio*.

Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti and Dr. B. C. Ghosh—*Secretaries* ; Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen and Mr. Prafulla Kumar Roy—*Assistant Secretaries*.

## THE SUB-COMMITTEES

### (8) WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AND CELEBRATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

*Function:—Arrangements for the holding of a Ladies' Conference and celebrations.*

*Personnel: Mrs. P. K. Ray, Mrs. Kamini Roy, Lady Abala Bose, Sja. Sarala Devi Chadhurani, Mrs. B. L. Chandhuri, Mrs. Sarojini Datta, Mrs. Purnima Basak, Miss Jyotirmayi Ganguli, Sja. Santa Devi, Mrs. Santvana Roy, Mrs. Sobhana Ray, Mrs. Nalini Bose, Mrs. Arundhati Chatterjee, Mrs. Sudhirkumar Sen, Sja. Bani Devi, Mrs. Usha Halder.*

*Mrs. Kumudini Bose—Secretary.*

*Mrs. Tatini Das—Joint Secretary.*

### (9) EXHIBITION SUB-COMMITTEE

*Function:—Arrangements for the holding of an Exhibition and a "Mela."*

*Personnel:—Dr. Smitikumar Chatterji, Mr. Amal Home, Dr. Sachikumar Chatterji, Mr. Kshemendranath Tagore, Mr. Sureshchandra Mazumdar, Mr. Sarojendranath Ray, Mr. J. K. Biswas, Mr. Amiyakumar Sen, Dr. Anilkumar Sen, Mr. Rajshekhar Bose, Mr. Gonendranath Banerjee, Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, Mr. Prafullakumar Roy, Mr. Prabhat Chandra Ganguli, Mr. Brajendranath Banerji, Mr. Johan van Manen, Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Mr. Kedarnath Chatterjee, Dr. Upendranath Ghosal, Rev. G. H. C. Angus, the Secretary of the College Library at Serampore; Mr. J. N. Basu, Mr. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya and Dr. B. C. Ghosh, ex-officio.*

*Mr. Kshitish Prasad Chattopadhyaya—Secretary.*

### (10) PERMANENT MEMORIALS SUB-COMMITTEE

*Functions:—Arrangements, in CALCUTTA, for (i) a bronze Statue, (ii) a Portrait in oils, (iii) the re-naming of the northern half of Upper Circular Road as "Rammohun Roy Road," and (iv) acquiring Rammohun Roy's Maniktala Residence; at RADHANAGORE, (v) the erection of a Stone Pillar, and (vi) the completion of the Memorial Buildings.*

*Personnel:—Maharaja Sir Prodyot Coomar Tagore, Chairman; Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Sir Bipinbehari Ghose, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Mr. Satyananda Bose, Mr. Amal Home, Mr. B. N. Sasmal, Mr. J. C. Mukerjee, Mr. Sudhirkumar Sen, Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, Mr. J. C. Gupta, Mr. Sachindra Prasad Basu, Mr. Kshemendra Nath Tagore; Messrs. J. N. Basu, Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya and Satis Chandra Chakravarti, ex-officio.*

*Mr. Dhirendranath Mitra—Secretary.*

### (11) FOUNDATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

*Function:—Foundation of a Rammohun Ro  
SHIPS on Comparative Religion.*

## RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY

*Personnel*:—Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Mr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Mrs. P. K. Ray, Mrs. N. C. Sen, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Dr. Satyananda Roy, Mrs. S. R. Das, Mr. V. R. Shinde, Mr. Vithal Narayan Chandavarkar, the Maharaja Bahadur of Pithapuram, Sir Venkataratnam Naidu, Sir B. L. Mitter, Lady B. L. Mitter, Mr. J. N. Basu, Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti and Dr. B. C. Ghosh *ex-officio*.

Mr. S. C. Mukerjee—*Secretary*.

